

May/June 1996 \$2.00

MONTANA OUTDOORS





OUR POINT OF VIEW



DAVE BOOKS

So you want to pass the ranch along to the kids? You want to buy some land and start your own ranch? Maybe you want a place to hunt and fish? And you like the feeling of all this wide-open space?

What's the problem?

The problem has been growing for years in Montana. It may well be out of control. I heard recently that 25% of Beaverhead County is for sale. It's the largest cattle producer in the state and also one of the most popular for hunters and anglers. Similar signs are showing up all across the state.

Cattle prices have fallen dramatically, forcing some to sell. Others cannot afford the taxes when they try to pass along land to the next generation. Expansion is hard because land values reflect the high recreational value of the land and cannot be paid off by agricultural production.

What's at stake?

Montana's heritage is at stake. As the land turns over, new owners with differing values and beliefs become our neighbors. "No trespassing" signs often appear. Subdivisions may appear. Some newcomers become part of the community, many do not.

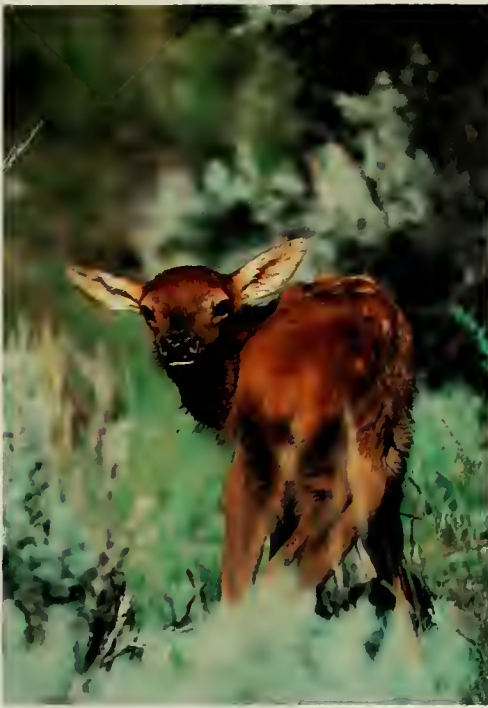
What's the solution?

It's a dilemma. We fight as fiercely to protect our right to do what we want with our land as we do to protect our heritage.

For some, there is a way to do both. Habitat Montana is FWP's habitat conservation program. We have \$2.5 million a year in license fees available to buy land. Our preference is to purchase conservation easements. We buy a landowner's future rights to subdivide the land, for example, which provides money to pay off inheritance taxes or expand operations. In turn, we have protected wildlife habitat and open space for present and future generations.

We are exploring other ways of easing the transition that is occurring in Montana in order to preserve the very thing that so many are eager to possess. If you have ideas on how to do that, please take time to share them with me at the address below.

Patrick J. Graham, Director
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks; 1420 East Sixth Avenue;
P.O. Box 200701; Helena, MT 59620-0701



Elk calves are just some of the wildlife benefiting from FWP's conservation easement program (page 15).

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Montana Outdoors (ISSN 0027-0016), the official publication of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, is published bimonthly (January, March, May, July, September, and November). Contributions (manuscripts or illustrations) are welcome with the understanding that the department or the editor cannot be responsible for loss or damage. All contributions will be published at the discretion of the editor. For subscription information, phone 800/678-6668 (toll-free). Subscription rates are \$7 for one year, \$12.50 for two years, and \$17 for three years. (Please add \$3 per year for Canadian subscriptions. All other foreign subscriptions, air mail only, are \$22 for one year.) Individual copies and back issues cost \$3 each (includes postage). Although *Montana Outdoors* is copyrighted, permission to reprint articles is available by writing our office or phoning us at 406/444-2474. All correspondence should be addressed: *Montana Outdoors*, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 930 West Custer Ave., P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701. ©Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1996. All rights reserved. Indexed by States' Periodical Index, 1660 Smithville Road, Havre, MT 59501.

Postmaster: Send address changes to *Montana Outdoors*, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 930 West Custer Ave., P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-0701. Second-class postage paid at Helena, MT 59620, and additional mailing offices.

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*At the Matthew Quigley
Buffalo Rifle Match
near Forsyth,
modern marksmen
line up to duplicate
the feats of the old-time
buffalo hunters.*





Quigley *down* the Yellowstone

story and photos by DAN VICHOREK

THE ANNUAL MATTHEW QUIGLEY long-range buffalo rifle match near Forsyth each spring is the biggest shootout in those parts since Custer's last embarrassment, and a lot more fun than the previous event was for the guests of honor. That's according to A.G. Lee, Jr., who represents the Buffalo Rifle Division of the Forsyth Rifle and Pistol Club, which sponsors the match.

The match takes place on Lee's ranch on the old traditional range of the buffalo outside of Forsyth, a few miles north of the Yellowstone River. It requires a fair amount of room, with a firing line over 600 yards long and a series of six targets at ranges up to nearly 800 yards. The rules of the match are pretty plain.

"The first rule is that there ain't any rules," Lee tells the gathered participants in his orientation remarks just before the firing officially starts. "The main thing is to hang loose and have fun."

Mr. Lee is skeptical about elaborate systems of rules and claims he doesn't

have any, but he is firm in stating that certain "procedures" must be followed in the match. No alcohol is allowed, for example, and everybody must be scrupulous about safe gun handling. All firing is from a sitting position with a cross-sticks rest, except for the 225-yard match, which is fired offhand. In his comments to the gathered shooters at the beginning of the 1994 match, Lee pointed out that people with disabilities were welcome and would not be held unreasonably to the requirements on firing position. Lee's comments were intended to head off any possible complaints about people not firing from the approved sitting position. "I don't want to hear any bellyaching about somebody taking advantage. We got disabled people out here, one man's got a fused spine, and another is in a wheelchair. If you think they've got too good a deal, maybe you should think of yourself in their place."

Any black powder cartridge rifle of at least .375 caliber, lever action, single shot, or trapdoor Springfield, is okay at the Quigley match, with any cast or



swaged lead bullet, any safe powder charge, smokeless or black, and any metallic sights. Modern rifles such as Ruger single shots and Winchester lever actions are allowed as long as they meet the caliber requirements. Some types of rifles are placed in their own category of competition. Shooters using original trapdoor Springfields, for example, compete with other people shooting the same type of rifle. The highest scores with Springfields get prizes. Shooters in various categories compete against other people in their own category; shooters over 62 compete against each other, kids against kids, women against women, and so on. There are lots of prizes for shooters who score well in any category.

All the shooters from all the categories are more or less randomly lumped together during the firing, though friends and family members can stay together. The winners in the different categories are sorted out afterwards.

Four shooters fire by turns from each firing point at the target that belongs to that point. Each shooter fires one shot, then the next person fires a shot, and so on until all four have fired four shots at that target. A scorekeeper keeps the record.

The targets are different sizes and shapes, made of steel plate and mounted so that they ring when struck by a bullet.

"Each one rings different," Lee said. "That's the only way the scorekeepers can keep the hits straight."

The most distant target, 781 yards out on the north end of the firing line, is a life-size silhouette of a buffalo, painted black. In the 1995 match it had a large white bullseye painted on its midriff. It is five feet high at the shoulder, "about the same as a cow buffalo," Lee said. Any shot that rings the target is scored as a hit, even if it bounces a time or two on the way.

The second target, one that anybody can hit sometimes, Lee said, is a six-foot circular target, painted white, at a range of about 600 yards. Subsequent targets are smaller and at shorter ranges, culminating in a bucket-shaped target for the 225-yard offhand position.

The bucket shape pays homage to the Tom Selleck movie, "Quigley Down Under," in which Selleck uses a Sharps rifle to blow up a bucket that's a lot farther away than 225 yards. "The guys in the club [Forsyth Rifle and Pistol] had their imagination captured by that movie," Lee said. "That's how the match got its name."

Lee sends Selleck copies of materials pertaining to the match, and provided him with a video of the match one year. At the beginning of the 1994 match, Lee read the assembled shooters a message from Selleck, expressing his regrets at not being able to come. Although absent in person, Selleck was present in other ways. Each plaque awarded to winning shooters in different categories bore his signature. On the night before the match, one of the bars in Forsyth ran the "Quigley" film in a back room, where a pretty serious audience took it in.

The match is fired on a Sunday beginning at 9:00 a.m. Saturday from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. is set aside for practice, with more practice from 7:00 to 8:45 Sunday morning. No sighting shots are allowed during the match.

At the 1994 performance, I went first to the northernmost firing point to watch the shooters plug away at the buffalo silhouette. It became clear that this was not an easy task. Shot after shot went downrange, with no hits.

The scorekeeper kept an eye on the target with a spotting scope, and could spot most of the shots even if they missed. "About 10 feet low and off to the right. Good elevation, but four feet to the left." And so on. The 16 shots from the first four shooters rang up exactly one hit.

Part of the difficulty facing the first group to fire at the target not much less than half a mile away was a variable breeze out of the south. "A 10-mile an hour wind will blow a bullet off 12 to 15 feet at 800 yards," A.G. Lee said. Later, the wind died down, making the shooting easier for the shooters.

After observing the first group firing at the buffalo target, I walked down the length of the firing line, pausing to watch various shooters. The booming

of the big guns was remarkably easy on the ears, compared with the crack of modern rifles. Most of the shooters were using black powder with muzzle velocities just below the speed of sound, producing a mellow boom. The big lead bullets made an audible *whoosh* heading downrange.

Predominant calibers were .40 and .45, with the .40-65 Winchester and .45-70 Government probably the most common. The .50 caliber buffalo guns famous in song and story throw too much lead and kick too much to be useful as target rifles. Most buffalo hunters used the lighter calibers anyway.

At the Quigley match, nearly all the rifles were modern reproductions of the old-time buffalo guns. Perhaps the most prized on the buffalo range, as much for shooting targets in the 1990s as for shooting buffalo in the 1870s, were the various configurations of the 1874 model Sharps. These mule-eared cannons were made originally in New Haven, Connecticut, by the Sharps Rifle Co., and are made now by the Shiloh Rifle Co. and the C. Sharps Arms Co., both of Big Timber, Montana. C. Sharps also makes the 1875 Sharps, a more streamlined, some would say "feminine" design, but in the same macho calibers. The original Sharps rifles were the "Cadillac" of buffalo guns, highly prized by the hunters. Mr. Lee pointed out.

One of the early white residents of the Forsyth vicinity was Pete Jackson, who, among various occupations, used an 18-pound Sharps .40-90 to kill over 5,000 buffalo. Life was not easy in Pete Jackson's day, but it looks good to a lot of people who feel misplaced in the latter part of the twentieth century. This partly explains the popularity of the reproduction Sharps rifles, which cost at least two or three times as much as a modern sporting rifle.

Some shooters not only shoot targets and big game with the old-style rifles but wear period clothing to the shoots. A representation of folks at the shoots looked as though they had recently arrived from 1876, or from a spaghetti Western movie.



At the Quigley match, nearly all the rifles are modern reproductions of old-time buffalo guns. Most are black powder rifles in .40 and .45 caliber. Targets range from 225 yards to almost 800 yards away.

I took in all these sights, the period costumes, the beautiful rifles so lovingly cared for, the muzzle blasts bending the tall and abundant sweet clover in front of the firing positions, smoke rings spinning out from the muzzles to the size of horse collars, curlews crying overhead, the green hills rolling away in every direction, all seasoned with the occasional whiff of sulfur from the black powder smoke. The troubled twentieth century seemed far away.

It occurred to me that I would like to view the whole scene from some distance, so I asked A.G. Lee if I could walk around on his ranch. "Sure," he said. "Walk wherever you want but don't get in front of the guns."

Half a mile away, I sat on a ridge overlooking the shoot. At that distance the shots were not loud at all, rolling faintly over the land as though from a previous time. Some guns were barely audible, but the countryside rang with the clangorous symphony of the metal targets, each ringing out its own distinctive note as the big slugs slammed into it.

After the shoot, A.G. Lee did a post mortem for me. In 1994, a total of 156 shooters, including at least 12 women, had fired 3,744 shots for score in the

match, and about that many more in practice on match day and the day before. The numbers increased in 1995. For the 1994 match, assuming the average bullet weight was 450 grains, Lee calculated that about 478 pounds of lead had been fired. If the average powder load was 60 grains, then 64 pounds of black powder had been burned. He figured the aggregate value of all the rifles used in the match to be in the neighborhood of \$200,000.

No one who fired in the 1994 match was totally skunked, as every shooter recorded at least one hit on some target, Lee said. On the other hand, nobody hit every shot. The overall winner, Mark Sackett of Sheridan, Wyoming, hit 20 shots, and received a Montana-shaped wall plaque autographed by Tom Selleck. A.G. Lee shot in the "Graybeard" class for fully-seasoned shooters and came up with 13 hits, which did not win him anything.

Shooters came from many states and Canadian provinces, from as far away as Virginia.

One incentive to participate in the Quigley match is a new Sharps rifle that the Shiloh Rifle Co. donates each year. Participating shooters draw for the rifle. The donated rifle in 1994 was a "Montana Roughrider" model, which

retailed in 1994 for \$908 in the Standard Supreme grade.

If you can't win a Sharps, you can always buy one. The Shiloh Rifle Co. makes at least a dozen basic variations of the Model 1874 Sharps, with a nearly inexhaustible list of custom features available. Real enthusiasts can have a "Quigley Rifle," just like the one Tom shot the bucket with in the movie, for a piddling \$2,650. He got his in *Big Timber*, too. The demand for Shiloh's rifles commonly generates back order periods of more than three years. Model 1875s are available a little quicker from C. Sharps.

Talk about long-range buffalo rifles always leads somebody to ask why such rifles are not much used for hunting today, if they are so good. The reason is that those big lead slugs have a trajectory like a tomcat heaved out the back door. Ballistic tables show that a 500-grain .45 bullet traveling 1,100 feet a second will drop 33 feet at 500 yards, from a 100-yard zero. Fourteen feet of that drop comes between 400 and 500 yards, meaning that the bullet drops a foot for every 21 feet of forward progress between those ranges. The drop between 100 yards and 200 yards is about four feet. At 800 yards, those big lead lumps drop 100 feet below the muzzle, hurtling out of the sky like frozen turkeys dropped from a Piper Cub.

Power is not lacking at long range, however. A.G. Lee said that even at a thousand yards the lead bullets are smashed into powder when they hit a steel target.

Well, anyway, the Matthew Quigley shootout gives a lot of people the luxury of living in the past for a couple of days each year. And you can count on it. As A.G. Lee said, "We're gonna hold this match on the third Sunday in June until the year 2093. At least." And even if Tom Selleck is not there, A.G. Lee will be.

Editor's note.—This year's match is scheduled for June 16, with registration and practice beginning on June 15. For more details, contact A.G. Lee, Jr., at (406) 356-7746. ■

MONTANA'S THREATENED SPECIES

A Status Report

by MIKE ADERHOLD

As of the end of 1995, 758 animals and plants were listed as endangered in the United States, and 204 animals and plants were listed as threatened. In Montana we now have seven animals classified as endangered, and five animals and plants classified as threatened. This article summarizes information available at the beginning of 1996 for the state's threatened species; the March/April 1996 issue included a similar summary for the state's endangered species.

BALD EAGLE

On July 12, 1995, the status of the bald eagle was changed from endangered to threatened in the lower 48 states. It is the first and only Montana threatened or endangered species to be downlisted since the 1973 Endangered Species Act became law.

Bald eagle numbers, estimated at a quarter of a million in the lower 48 states before 1800, declined steadily throughout the late 1800s and early 1900s. Raptors at this time were regarded as vermin and shot on sight. The Bald Eagle Protection Act of 1940 increased public awareness and made indiscriminate shooting, poisoning, collecting, and trading of bald eagles illegal, stemming the decline for a time. But the advent of DDT and related pesticides during World War II and their widespread post-war use soon caused eagle reproduction to plummet. In 1963, a National Audubon Society survey reported only 417 active nests in the lower 48 states.

After years of research, scientists determined that DDE, a breakdown product of DDT, accumulates in the fatty tissues of female eagles and impairs the calcium release necessary for eggshell formation. This induces thin shells and reproductive failure during incubation. These findings eventually led to the banning of DDT and related chemicals in the U.S. in 1972.

In 1978, bald eagles throughout the lower 48 states were classified as endangered, except in Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Washington, and Oregon, where they were designated threatened. Between 1984 and 1994, the number of known breeding pairs in the Pacific States Bald Eagle Recovery Region (Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana) increased from 479 pairs to 1,192 pairs. One-fourth of all the breeding bald eagles in the lower 48



Bald eagle.

states come from this region.

Delisting requirements for the region include: (1) a minimum of 800 nesting pairs; (2) an average reproductive rate of 1.0 fledged young per pair with an average success rate per occupied site of not less than 65%; (3) breeding population goals met in at least 80% of the management zones; and (4) stable or increasing wintering populations. These goals have been met in the Pacific states and, if conditions continue, it could be the first recovery region where the bald eagle is delisted.

In Montana the bald eagle population has clearly improved since listing. Between 1978 and 1995 the number of known breeding pairs increased from 12 to 166, well above the downlisting goal of 99 breeding pairs cited in the 1986 Bald Eagle Recovery Plan. A summer

of 1995 survey found 196 viable nesting territories in Montana, placing the state seventh in the nation (behind Florida, Minnesota, Washington, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Oregon) in numbers of breeding bald eagles and eagles produced.

The Montana Bald Eagle Working Group, formed in 1982 and composed of representatives from federal and

state agencies, tribes, universities, conservation groups, and private industry, has provided leadership at the state level. In 1994 the group developed a "Montana Bald Eagle Management Plan" to provide information and guide landowners and resource managers in conserving eagle habitat.

PIPING PLOVER

The piping plover, a two-ounce shorebird of open beaches, alkali flats, and sandy areas, breeds along the Atlantic coast from southern Canada to North Carolina; along major rivers and wetlands in the northern Great Plains from southern Saskatchewan and Manitoba



D. ROBERT FRANZ

Piping plover.

through Nebraska; and along portions of the western Great Lakes. Most piping plovers winter along the coastal beaches of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts from the Carolinas to the Yucatan Peninsula.

Fewer than 2,800 breeding pairs of piping plovers were reported in the U.S. and Canada in 1995. About half of these were in the Great Plains region, and most of the rest were along the Atlantic Coast. Just a few dozen birds were observed on the beaches of Lake Superior and Lake Michigan. The Great Lakes population is classified as endangered, while the other two populations are classed as threatened.

On rivers, piping plovers use beaches, sand flats, and drained floodplains where vegetative cover is less than 20%. Widespread river impoundment throughout the Great Plains has hurt this species by curtailing the scouring of sandbars in spring and limiting formation of new sandbars. In 1994 a draft recovery plan recommended the status of the plains population of the piping plover be changed from threatened to endangered. This plan is being rewritten and has not yet been released to the public.

Little attention was paid to the piping plover in Montana until its listing in 1985, although prior breeding records existed from Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge

near Malta and the Fort Peck Dam area. Work on this species is coordinated by the Montana Piping Plover Recovery Committee, a group led by the USFWS in cooperation with several state and federal agencies and a host of interested birders, many affiliated with Montana Audubon Society chapters.

Nesting habitat in Montana is primarily unvegetated sand-pebble beaches or islands in freshwater and saline wetlands and shorelines and exposed beds of larger reservoirs and rivers in the north-central and eastern portions of the state. Although Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge and nearby wetlands account for almost 80% of the piping plover production in Montana, nesting also occurs on the Missouri River below Fort Peck, on the C.M. Russell and Bowdoin national wildlife refuges, and at Alkali Lake on the Blackfeet Reservation. Annual nesting site surveys have been conducted since 1987 and, as more people have participated, new sites have been checked every year.

Abundant spring rainfall and high water reduced piping plover nesting habitat in Montana in 1994 and 1995. In 1995, 62 pairs of piping plovers were observed (exceeding the recovery objective of 60 nesting pairs for the third consecutive year); the total of 169 adults recorded was the second lowest number since 1987. Seventeen active nests produced only 20 young, the second poorest production since the surveys began.

Efforts underway to help the piping plover in Montana include: (1) timing spring releases from Fort Peck Dam to more closely mirror the behavior of a natural river (i.e., reduced flows during the nesting period); (2) reducing human, dog, and vehicle disturbance during nesting; (3) informing the public about plover biology and life requirements; and (4) minimizing predation (especially from gulls) by installing temporary, large-mesh cages over the nests. On the Blackfeet Reservation, gravel is being added to a plover area in an attempt to enhance the ability of a beach to carry invertebrates on which plovers feed.

An international piping plover survey involving 26 states, three Canadian provinces, seven countries, and more than 1,000 volunteers was undertaken in 1991. The survey is scheduled to be repeated and expanded in 1996 and every five years thereafter. The 1996 survey will include a two-week count in June and another two-week count in winter.

GRIZZLY BEAR

The grizzly bear's historic range covered much of North America from the plains westward to California and from central Mexico north through Canada and Alaska. Today, the grizzly is found in only about 2% of its original range in the lower 48 states. It was listed as threatened south of Canada in July of 1975.

Currently, south of Canada, there are five grizzly bear subpopulations in Wyoming, Washington, Idaho, and Montana. Grizzlies are difficult to survey, but it is generally agreed there are more than 350 in the northwest Montana Rockies, about 250 in and around Yellowstone National Park, 25 in the Selkirk Mountains of northern Idaho and northeastern Washington, and 20 to 50 in the Cabinet-Yaak area of northern Idaho and western Montana. Probably less than a dozen grizzlies survive in the North Cascades. There are about 22,000 grizzlies in Canada and more than 30,000 in Alaska.

Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.—Since 1983, grizzly mortality has declined and productivity has increased in this ecosystem, prompting the USFWS to issue a revised Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan in 1993 that changed the criteria for delisting. Following a legal challenge by the Greater Yellowstone Coalition in 1995, a federal court upheld much of the plan but asked for further detail on recovery criteria, population viability, habitat concerns, females-with-cubs survey criteria, and livestock-related mortality. In October of 1995 the USFWS asked the court to reconsider its ruling. The court rejected this appeal, citing uncertainty about the way the quality and quantity of habitat is monitored and the way the grizzly population is measured. This decision has effectively taken delisting off the table for now.

Because it is completely isolated, the Yellowstone subpopulation is vulnerable to genetic problems, and the recovery plan talks about augmentation to maintain genetic health. Research on this issue is being sponsored by the Yellowstone Grizzly Foundation, a nonprofit organization founded in 1986.

In 1995, 17 grizzly mortalities were documented in the Yellowstone ecosystem: six resulted from management actions, four from illegal kills, three from humans acting in self-defense, three from accidental electrocutions, and one unexplained. Fifty-two grizzly/human conflicts were reported from the Montana portion of this ecosystem in 1995, resulting in 10 captures and five relocations. Wyoming reported 123 incidents, including 32 livestock losses and 12 relocations. Yellowstone National Park had no human injuries, but three property damage incidents were reported.

Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem.—In 1995 the USFWS helped negotiate two landmark agreements that partially resolved long-standing logging and grizzly issues in the Swan Valley. One involved 296,000 acres of



Grizzly bear.

public and corporate lands administered by Plum Creek Timber Company, USFS, and the State of Montana. In a separate but related agreement, Swan Valley residents developed land management recommendations for private landowners on issues involving sanitation, subdivision, road construction, and real estate disclosures. These agreements will facilitate grizzly movement between the Mission Mountains and the more secure Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex, and help reduce human pressure on grizzlies during the critical spring feeding period.

Other developments in 1995 included: (1) new USFS food handling regulations for wilderness areas; (2) standardized methods for reporting grizzly mortalities and incidents; (3) an information campaign to explain roading issues; and (4) development of a "draft conservation strategy" that describes how the grizzly and its habitat will be managed following delisting.

In 1995 the Northern Continental Divide population suffered 17 known mortalities: seven from management actions, three from illegal kills, two from train kills, three from natural causes, and two from unknown causes.

Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystem.—In the 1980s, only a few grizzlies remained in this area. In a first-time experiment with augmentation, the USFWS radio-collared and released four subadult female grizzlies from British Columbia between 1990 and 1994. None of these bears has caused problems and the initial effort has been judged a success. The ultimate success of this project will depend on whether these female bears survive, find mates, and reproduce.

Between 1986 and 1995, only 13 individual grizzlies were documented in this ecosystem. The USFWS plans to continue monitoring this small population.

Bitterroot-Selway Ecosystem.—This six million acres of unoccupied habitat is the largest unbroken expanse of roadless area left in the lower 48 states. The heart of it is in Idaho, but about 250,000 acres extend eastward into Montana. It is historic grizzly country, but the last known grizzly there was killed in 1956. The USFWS is preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) that will assess the possibility of reintroducing grizzlies to this area; a draft is scheduled for completion in 1996. Reintroduction could begin as early as the summer of 1998.

Because this grizzly reintroduction proposal is controversial, a new, collaborative approach is being tried. Four

organizations—Defenders of Wildlife, the National Wildlife Federation, the Intermountain Forest Industry Association, and Idaho's Resource Organization on Timber Supply—are working together in an unprecedented way to foster grizzly recovery while maintaining the health of local economies. This coalition has devel-

oped an alternative for the EIS that would assign "experimental" status to reintroduced grizzlies and authorize a Citizens' Management Committee (with minority agency representation) to guide overall management of the Bitterroot Grizzly Recovery Program.

WATER HOWELLIA

Water howellia (*Howellia aquatilis*), classified as threatened in 1994, is a small aquatic plant that historically occupied wetland areas of five states in the Pacific Northwest. Today it is limited to 101 small wetlands in five areas of Washington, Idaho, and Montana. The majority of these wetlands, totaling less than 100 acres, are near Spokane, Washington, and in northwestern Montana's Swan River Valley.

In the Swan Valley the plant is found in 58 places, primarily woodland potholes less than 1.5 acres in size created by melting ice left after glaciers retreated 10,000 years ago. Thirty-four of these sites are on national forest land. One of the largest populations is on The Nature Conservancy's Swan River Oxbow Preserve, and most of the rest are on land owned by Plum Creek Timber Co.

Water howellia is an annual plant reproducing entirely from seed. It cannot germinate in water, so reproduction occurs only when ponds dry out enough to expose seeds to air. The next year's plants overwinter as seedlings under the snow. In early spring it resumes growth in water that accumulates from melting snow and spring



KRISTI DUBOIS

Water howellia.

rains. The size of a population partly depends on how extensively the potholes dried the previous summer.

The year 1995 was a good year for *Howellia* because most of the potholes dried out during the summer of 1994. Conversely, 1994 was a poor year because of wet conditions in 1993.

The Flathead National Forest recently finalized a conservation strategy for *Howellia*, and the USFWS has contracted with the Montana Natural Heritage Program to develop a recovery plan due out in late 1996.

UTE LADIES'-TRESSES

Ute ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes diluvialis*) is a member of the orchid family whose primary range coincides with the ancestral home of the Ute Tribe in Colorado and Utah. Listed as threatened in 1992, it is presently found in less than two dozen sites along Colorado's East Front and in the upper Colorado River drainage in eastern Utah. The discovery of a single population in Montana in 1994 represents a major extension of the species' known range. This population, consisting of less than 100 flowering stems, was found in a Jefferson County wetland by Bonnie Heidel, botanist with the Montana Natural Heritage Program.

A long-lived perennial, Ute ladies'-tresses inhabits intact riparian areas, wet meadows, and springs. It is tolerant of flooding and some grazing but is generally intolerant of shade, drying, and soil compaction. It is believed to have originated from Rocky Mountain and Great Plains ladies'-tresses when their ranges overlapped in cooler, wetter Pleistocene climates.

Very little is known about the life history of this species. Orchids have small seeds that require a symbi-



BONNIE HEIDEL

Ute ladies'-tresses.

otic association with soil fungi for germination. They begin as underground plants that persist for several years before leaves emerge aboveground. Ute ladies'-tresses generally flowers in August. The plants often occur in clumps, but it is not known whether these clumps are composed of separate individuals or whether all stems arise from a single rootstock. ■

MANAGING MONTANA'S PADDLEFISH: NEW APPROACHES

by DENNIS SCARNECCHIA and PHIL STEWART

Yellowstone and Missouri. Hallowed blue-ribbon trout waters, right? In their upper reaches, where they run clear and cold, yes. But farther east, out on the prairie, where these rivers

surge and roil with spring runoff the color of cocoa, they become home to sauger, catfish, sturgeon, and a unique, ancient fish known as the paddlefish.

Granted, if delicate flyrods and matching the hatch are your passion, fishing for paddlefish may not be for you. They do not have the tradition and mystique of trout. Nor do they have the toothy pugnacity of fish like bass and northern pike. But they do have *size*. Consider that the largest trout ever caught in Montana—a lake trout—weighed 42 pounds, and the largest northern pike a few pounds less. Then add exactly 100 pounds, and you have the weight of Montana's record



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paddlefish.

Not surprisingly, catching a fish of this size requires special gear. Because paddlefish eat tiny organisms called zooplankton, they don't strike at baits or lures.

Anglers must instead snag them as they congregate on their upriver spawning migrations, either in deep holes or below obstructions such as diversion dams.

Snagging gear consists of a long spinning rod and a spinning reel filled with 20- to 50-pound-test line. Attached to the end of the line are an 8/0 to 10/0 treble hook and a 4- to 6-ounce

Popular spots for snagging paddlefish include Fred Robinson Bridge on the Missouri River northeast of Lewistown and the Intake diversion on the Yellowstone River 15 miles northeast of Glendive (right).



weight. The hook and lead are jerked through the water in probable paddlefish haunts until hook meets fish. When the hook lodges in the fish's tough skin, the fight is on. Depending on the size of the fish, where it is hooked, the water temperature, and the river stage, landing a paddlefish may consist of a 60-second tug-of-war or a 20-minute struggle an angler will never forget.

Fishing for paddlefish in Montana takes place primarily in two locales: the lower Yellowstone River below Glendive, and the Missouri River just upstream from Fort Peck Reservoir. Each spring, mature paddlefish living in Lake Sakakawea (a Missouri River reservoir in North Dakota) migrate upstream to the mouth of the Yellowstone River, then up the Yellowstone to Intake, a diversion dam 15 miles northeast of Glendive. In high water years, these fish may continue as far as the Cartersville diversion at Forsyth. Other paddlefish migrating upstream from Lake Sakakawea stay in the Missouri River, some going as far as the dredge cuts below Fort Peck Dam. These fish all belong to the Yellowstone Sakakawea stock, one of two stocks of paddlefish inhabiting Montana.

The other, known as the upper Fort Peck stock, consists of fish that mature in Fort Peck reservoir and migrate up the Missouri River above the reservoir to spawn. These fish are caught at popular fishing spots such as Slippery Ann and the Fred Robinson Bridge northeast of Lewistown.

Although paddlefish are distributed throughout the Missouri and Mississippi rivers in portions of 22 states, they are not abundant in most of their range due to habitat loss and exploitation. Paddlefish need free-flowing rivers, often with high natural sediment loads, for successful spawning and survival of young. Because most free-flowing rivers have been interrupted with reservoirs, much paddlefish spawning habitat (seasonally flooded gravel bars) has been destroyed. Overfishing has also depleted populations in many states, particularly commercial fishing for meat and eggs.

Montana's paddlefish continue to



Paddlefish eggs are donated to the Glendive Chamber of Commerce in exchange for fish cleaning services, with proceeds from the sale of caviar helping to fund community projects as well as paddlefish management and research.

thrive because good spawning habitat still exists in the lower Yellowstone River and the Missouri river above Fort Peck Reservoir. Today, Montana's stocks are among the nation's last remaining wild stocks capable of supporting sport fisheries.

An overharvested paddlefish stock may take years to recover, if it ever does. One reason is that paddlefish are finicky spawners, even in free-flowing rivers. Cooperative research by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and the North Dakota Game and Fish Department on the Yellowstone-Sakakawea stock indicates that years of high flows during May and June on the Yellowstone—1991, 1993, and 1995—resulted in much better reproductive success than did the intervening years of low flows. Paddlefish require the right combination of flows, temperatures (about 60°F), and perhaps other factors such as turbidity (silt load) for spawning. Suitable conditions do not occur every year.

Second, young paddlefish take many years to mature once they emerge from their eggs and move down into the reservoirs to feed. Males typically need eight or nine years of growth before they migrate upriver the first time, while females may need 15 to 18 years

or even longer. In four years of intensive sampling at Intake, biologists have found fewer than 10 female paddlefish younger than 15 years of age. Once mature, individual males may participate in spawning only every other year and females only every three or more years.

Obviously, rebuilding a stock with such a long life cycle is a slow, difficult task. It is much better to keep the stock healthy in the first place. For this reason, FWP has made a long-term commitment to continual stock assessment and careful management of this unique fish. The intent is to provide sustainable fishing for wild fish while ensuring that overharvest does not occur.

Unfortunately, throughout much of its range down the Missouri and lower Mississippi rivers, the paddlefish has not been managed carefully in the past. Ironically, it has often been viewed as an oddity, or even a rough fish, of limited use and interest. Regulations in most states have been inconsistent and counterproductive, and paddlefish have often been taken in commercial fishing operations directed at more abundant species. In Montana, however, paddlefish fisheries have been monitored closely.

This monitoring began soon after paddlefish were first reported at Intake



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Biologists in North Dakota and Montana tag paddlefish to learn more about harvest rates and migration patterns. The Montana and North Dakota stocks are among the last wild stocks in the nation capable of supporting sport fisheries.

in 1962. Although there have long been paddlefish in the Yellowstone River, the Yellowstone-Sakakawea stock increased greatly in numbers after Garrison Dam created Lake Sakakawea in 1953. Such population booms are common in new reservoirs for many fish species, but have not been well documented in other paddlefish populations. Flooding of nutrient-rich vegetation and soils results in productive, sparsely inhabited waters. Nine years after Lake Sakakawea began to fill, the first large group of paddlefish was detected migrating up the Yellowstone, and the Intake fishery began to increase in popularity.

J. W. Robinson, a Montana State University (MSU) graduate student who investigated the age of these fish in 1964 and 1965 by counting annual rings (called annuli) on their lower jawbones, reported that nearly all were males about 10 years old. Clearly, they were among the first of the strong year classes of paddlefish benefiting from the food supply in newly formed Lake Sakakawea. The females, which would



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not mature for several years, were still down in the reservoir and had not yet made their first trip up the Yellowstone.

The next decade was to be a paddlefish version of the baby boom, with many years of successful reproduction in the Yellowstone and good survival of young in the gradually filling reservoir. By the mid-1970s, both female and male paddlefish were being caught at Intake. By this time females had begun to outnumber males in the harvest.

Bruce Rehwinkel, now a biologist with FWP, sampled the Yellowstone fish in 1973 and 1974 as part of his graduate work at MSU. He found that

these paddlefish were nearly all less than 20 years old, which meant they were born after the reservoir had begun to fill. The "baby boomers" were now resulting in a substantial fishery at Intake. In 1973 and 1974, 4,600 and 4,300 fish were caught by anglers; of these, slightly more than half were kept and the rest released.

By the mid-1980s, the paddlefish baby boomers had aged, and older females predominated in the harvest. Younger fish were still being caught, but older females produced the memorable catches. Most of these large female fish were 15 to 30 years old. Annual catches at Intake in the 1980s varied from 500 to more than 5,000 fish, with the largest catches occurring in years of high May-June flows on the Yellowstone.

Beginning in 1991, FWP began to monitor the harvest at Intake even more closely. From 1991 to 1994, the paddlefish stock at Intake continued to age. The baby boomers, still the source of most of the large females, were now 25 to 35 years old. In 1993 and 1994 there were indications that these fish were finally being depleted. From now on, the fishery will have to be sustained by the natural, year-in, year-out productivity of the reservoir, not from the benefits of initial filling.

Although the fishery at Intake has been one of the nation's most closely monitored paddlefish fisheries, the need, as well as the opportunity, for careful management increased even more in 1990 when the Montana Legislature authorized a roe donation program. Although paddlefish roe has long been recognized as a valuable source of caviar, until recent years most snaggers at Intake discarded the eggs with the rest of the entrails. Under the roe donation program, anglers can have their fish cleaned by the Glendive Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture. The Chamber processes the eggs into caviar and markets them, with 60% of the proceeds going to regional community programs (FWP receives 40% of net caviar income for management, research, and fishing access site development).

Although still managed strictly as a



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Montana anglers are allowed to keep one or two paddlefish per year, depending on the area being fished. A locking tag must be placed in the dorsal fin of each fish harvested.

recreational fishery, the paddlefishery has seen increased interest both in Montana and downriver in North Dakota. As a result, both of Montana's paddlefish stocks are now managed under a cooperative 10-year plan. Joint management is essential for the Yellowstone-Sakakawea stock because, although these fish migrate into Montana to spawn, they spend most of their time in North Dakota. Although North Dakota's harvest was much smaller than Montana's during the mid-1980s, by 1995 it had grown to equal the Montana harvest.

Several features of the Montana/North Dakota paddlefish management plan distinguish it from efforts in other states:

- *Emphasis on maintaining wild stocks.*—While most paddlefish stocks elsewhere are supplemented by hatchery fish, FWP biologists and many others believe that maintaining good natural habitat, natural spawning, and wild genetics is the best way to ensure long-term health of Montana's paddlefish.

- *Interstate cooperation.*—FWP and North Dakota biologists work together on the river and meet regularly to coordinate management. Biologists in both states tag adult paddlefish and exchange information on tag recoveries to obtain a better picture of harvest rates and migration patterns.

- *Three-stage early warning system using population age structure as an assessment tool.*—Young-of-the-year and yearling paddlefish are counted each August and September in Lake Sakakawea to give an index of reproductive success. After the yearling stage, biologists don't know how well the stock is doing until the fish mature, migrate upriver to spawn, and are harvested by anglers. At this stage, biologists develop a Spawning Adult Index by estimating the relative abundance of young (8- to 12-year-old) male paddlefish in the harvest. Good catches of young males mean there are females of these ages still down in the reservoir; the absence of young males means that reproduction was unsuccessful in the past and that few females can be expected in future years.

- *Total harvest quota for the Yellowstone-Sakakawea stock.*—Although total harvest quotas have been used successfully for other (especially marine) fisheries, such a quota has seldom been used for paddlefish. In 1996, anglers in Montana and North Dakota will be permitted to harvest a maximum of 1,500 fish from this stock in each state (currently there is no quota for the upper Fort Peck stock). The quota, presently based mainly on historic harvest levels, is intended to return total harvest of Yellowstone-Sakakawea paddlefish to the level of the 1970s.

- *Concerted information and education effort.*—FWP provides information to anglers and other interested persons on paddlefish and the fishery both at Intake and at Region 7 headquarters in Miles City. The department also seeks input from anglers on their preferences and attitudes about paddlefish and paddlefishing. In 1993, angler surveys provided detailed information on who participates in the fishery, where, and why. Like traditional anglers, paddlefish anglers cite being outdoors, experiencing the thrill of catching fish, and spending time with friends as primary motivations. Although these anglers rate paddlefish meat highly, obtaining meat is a secondary consideration.

- *Tag-based harvest system.*—In

both Montana and North Dakota, all paddlefish anglers are required to purchase a locking tag that is attached to the front of the dorsal fin when a fish is landed. This system provides useful information about fishermen and their catches, and makes enforcement easier.

- *Controlled catch-and-release fishery.*—From 1981 through 1993, the limit on the Yellowstone was two paddlefish per person per year with mandatory retention of snagged fish. This regulation served to prevent high-grading of the largest fish, all of which are females. In 1994, in response to concern about aging of the stock, an increasing overall harvest rate, and decreasing success of snaggers at Intake, anglers were limited to one fish per year. In 1995, the one-fish limit was continued; however, in response to anglers' requests to be able to continue fishing after filling their tag, two weekly catch-and-release periods (Wednesday and Sunday, 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.) were established at Intake during the six-week season.

In 1995 FWP biologists were on hand to assist in release of snagged fish and monitor the effects of snagging. Results indicate that paddlefish survive being snagged when they are released promptly and not handled by the gills. In addition, wounds from snagging are in nearly all cases minor; the tough skin usually protects the fish from serious damage, and wounds do not become infected by bacteria or fungi. Based on success of this trial catch-and-release program in 1995, it has been renewed for 1996.

All seven of these features—maintaining genetic integrity and habitat, interstate cooperation, an early warning system, a total harvest quota, an information and education program, a tag-based harvest system, and opportunity for catch-and-release fishing—are important for effective paddlefish management in Montana. The paddlefish is an irreplaceable part of the state's natural and recreational heritage. Its abundance in the twenty-first century will depend on these and other new management approaches, as well as continued cooperation between anglers and biologists. ■

LANDS LEGACY
**CONSERVATION
EASEMENTS:**



DAVE BOOKS

A True Partnership



SAM M. ESTELAND

by STEVE KNAPP

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has always had land conservation and management as part of its mission. Without appropriate habitat, wild animals will cease to exist, no matter how many rules and regulations are imposed.

Since the 1940s, direction of the department's wildlife program has been based on Aldo Leopold's fundamental tenet that "game management is the art of making the land produce sustained annual crops of wild game for recreational use." Concurrent with this direction has been development of an active "land program."

Initially, the main objective of the land program was acquisition of critical habitat for game animals—primarily winter range for elk, and nesting and resting areas for

waterfowl. Lands generally were chosen to accommodate a single species or group of species, and developed and managed to enhance these species. Land uses viewed as being in competition with the wildlife resource, such as livestock grazing, were eliminated. The department's wildlife program continued on this path from 1940 until the mid-1970s.

As the wildlife profession continued to grow and mature, wildlife managers learned that different land uses did not have to compete, but could be mutually beneficial. For example, livestock grazing, when managed with a focus on the land and plants, can enhance wildlife production.

Today, FWP's wildlife program still operates on Leopold's tenet, but our approach to making the land produce sustainable crops of wildlife has broadened. Management decisions on wildlife lands now revolve around improving the land's capability for the benefit of many species and uses. In some cases, agreements have been negotiated with private landowners allowing them to utilize department lands for rest-rotation grazing in return for like habitat management on their own lands. Sharecropping of department-owned agricultural lands is also practiced when it provides benefits to wildlife.

In 1987, the sportsmen and women of Montana proposed legislation to provide a stable, earmarked source of funding for FWP's wildlife habitat acquisition program. The resulting law, referred to as House Bill 526 (today part of a program known as "Habitat Montana"), sets aside approximately \$2.8

million annually in hunting license dollars for habitat conservation.

Although acquiring land in fee title can be effective in conserving important habitats, it can do so for only a relatively small amount of land. Land values and social resistance preclude purchase of extensive acreages. From 1940 through 1990, a period of half a century, the department acquired interest in only about 380,000 acres—less than half of one percent of the state's land area—for wildlife management areas. About half of this was in fee title (complete ownership); the remainder involved leases or other management agreements.

The 1987 Legislature, while recognizing that fee title is a valid tool in some cases, directed the department to use *conservation easements* to conserve wildlife habitat whenever possible. A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a property owner and another entity (in this case, FWP) that restricts the type and amount of development that may take place on the property. In return the landowner receives certain benefits, monetary or otherwise. Each easement's restrictions are tailored to the property, the interests of the landowner, and the interests of the acquiring party.

To better understand the easement concept, think of owning land as holding a bundle of rights. A landowner may sell or give away the whole bundle, or just one or two of these rights—for example, the right to construct buildings or to

Answers to Common Questions

Why Grant a Conservation Easement?

People grant conservation easements to protect their land from inappropriate development *while retaining private ownership*. By granting an easement in perpetuity, the owner may be assured that the resource values of his or her property will be protected indefinitely, no matter who the future owners are. Granting an easement can also yield tax savings, as discussed below.

What Kind of Property Can Be Protected by an Easement?

Any property with significant conservation or historic preservation values can be protected by an easement. This includes forests, wetlands, farms and ranches, endangered species habitat, beaches, scenic areas, historic areas, and more. Land conservation professionals can help you evaluate the relative features of your property.

Who Can Grant an Easement?

Any owner of property with conservation or historic resources may grant an easement. If the property belongs to more than one person, all owners must consent. If the property is mortgaged, the owner must obtain an agreement from the lender to subordinate its interests to those of the easement holder so that the easement cannot be extinguished in the event of foreclosure.

How Restrictive is an Easement?

An easement restricts development to the degree that is necessary to protect the significant values of that property. Sometimes this prohibits construction, sometimes it doesn't.

If the goal is to preserve a pristine natural area, for example, an easement may prohibit all construction, as well as activities that would alter the land's present natural condition. If the goal is to protect farm or ranch land, however, an easement may restrict subdivision



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subdivide the land. By giving up certain rights or agreeing to certain restrictions, a property owner grants an easement. By purchasing an easement, FWP can ensure that activities detrimental to wildlife (e.g., subdividing or sodbusting) do not take place, that public access is allowed, and that manage-

ment practices beneficial to wildlife are used.

After the 1987 legislature directed FWP to endeavor to use easements, the department engaged consultants to ask the public what it expected from the habitat program. The results were incorporated in the Fish, Wildlife & Parks

and development while allowing for structures and activities necessary for and compatible with the agricultural operation. *Even the most restrictive easements typically permit landowners to continue traditional uses of the land.*

How Long Does an Easement Last?

An easement can be written so that it lasts forever. This is known as a perpetual easement. Where state law allows, an easement may be written for a specified period, and this is known as a term easement. Only gifts of perpetual easements, however, can qualify a donor for income and estate tax benefits. Most conservation organizations accept only perpetual easements.

An easement runs with the land—that is, the original owner and all subsequent owners are bound by the restrictions of the easement. The easement is recorded at the county or town records office so that all future owners and lenders will learn about the restrictions when they obtain title reports.

What Are the Grantee's Responsibilities?

The organization or agency receiving the easement is responsible for enforcing the restrictions that the easement document spells out. To do this, the agency monitors the property typically once a year, usually accompanied by the owner. They determine whether the property remains in the condition prescribed by the easement and documented at the time of the grant. If a monitoring visit reveals that the easement has been violated, the agency has the right to require the owner to correct the violation.

How Can Donating an Easement Reduce a Property Owner's Income Tax?

The donation of a conservation easement is a tax-deductible charitable gift, provided that the easement is perpetual and is donated "exclusively for conservation purposes" to a qualified conservation organization or public agency. Internal Revenue Code Section 170(h) generally defines "conservation purposes" to include the following:

- The preservation of land areas for outdoor recreation by, or the education of, the general public.
- The protection of relatively natural habitats of fish, wildlife, or plants, or similar ecosystems.
- The preservation of open space—including farmland and forest land—for scenic enjoyment or pursuant to an adopted governmental conservation policy; in either case, such open space preservation must yield a significant public benefit.
- The preservation of historically important land areas or buildings.

To determine the value of the easement donation, the owner has the property appraised both at its fair market value without the easement restrictions and at its fair market value with the easement restrictions. The difference between these two appraised values is the easement value. Detailed federal regulations govern these appraisals.

Adapted with permission from The Conservation Easement Handbook, by Janet Diehl and Thomas S. Barrett.

Commission's "Habitat Montana" policy, which calls for services and benefits that:

- Conserve and enhance land, water, and wildlife.
- Contribute to hunting and fishing opportunities.
- Provide incentives for habitat conservation on private land.
- Contribute to nonhunting recreation.
- Promote habitat-friendly agriculture.
- Maintain the local tax base through payments in lieu of taxes for real estate, while demonstrating that productive wildlife habitat is compatible with agriculture and other land uses.

To see how the conservation easement process works, let's look at an example in which FWP worked with a landowner to obtain easements on three distinct properties totaling about 40,000 acres in four eastern Montana counties (for details, see "Good Deeds Without Deeds," *Montana Outdoors*, September/October 1994). The landowner, who had cooperated with FWP on habitat projects and had been involved in the block management (hunting access) program, wanted to increase his land base for livestock operations. He saw an opportunity to do this through acquisition of an FWP parcel with conservation easements already attached. The department, in turn, saw an opportunity to conserve sagebrush-grassland and riparian habitats on this landowner's holdings and provide public hunting recreation in perpetuity. The parties began to talk, negotiate, ponder, and discuss. The terms finally agreed upon are somewhat different for each property, but they are primarily as follows:

Landowner rights.—The landowner retains all rights not specifically restricted.

Restrictions on landowner activities.—(1) Removal of sagebrush is prohibited; (2) subdivision of the ranch is prohibited, except for agricultural purposes; (3) additional building is restricted; (4) game farming is prohibited; (5) additional cultivation of rangeland is prohibited; (6) renting, leasing, or sale of access to the land for hunting purposes is prohibited.

Department rights.—(1) The right to permanently preserve, protect, and enhance wildlife habitat, particularly sagebrush-grassland vegetation, through use of a rest-rotation grazing plan; (2) the right to enter the land to enforce the restrictions, and to establish and maintain vegetation monitoring transects and enclosures; (3) the right to provide for and manage, in coordination with the landowner, public access for hunting.

The fact that the landowner agreed to these terms implies that he gained what he wanted and felt reasonably comfortable with what the department wanted. How well did the easements meet the goals of the Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission's Habitat Montana policy? Let's look.

- Land, water, and wildlife is conserved and enhanced by prohibitions on sodbusting and subdividing. The game farming prohibition prevents potential conflict with wildlife.
- Hunting access is provided in perpetuity.

- The grazing system—the primary habitat conservation provision—ensures that healthy sagebrush/grassland vegetation is available to wildlife in perpetuity.
- Nonhunting recreation is not part of this particular easement.
- Habitat-friendly agriculture, through the rest-rotation grazing system, is promoted.
- County tax bases are not affected.

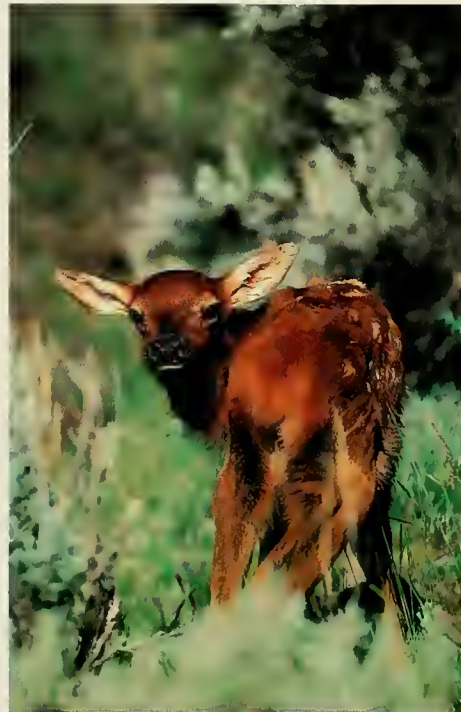
It appears the terms for these properties generally fulfill the needs of the landowner and follow Commission policy. The landowner retains and expands a viable agricultural operation, and the land is kept in a traditional pattern of use that benefits wildlife. The department conserves wildlife habitat over the long term and sportsmen and women enjoy the fruits of a program funded by their license money.

In another 3,000-acre conservation easement negotiated by FWP in 1994, provisions benefiting wildlife and recreationists were established for a portion of the Mannix Ranch near Helmville. When asked recently how he felt about the easement package for his ranch, David Mannix said, "It has worked out real well for us so far and we'd do it again in a heartbeat if the opportunity arose." Mannix acknowledged there is much to consider before completing a transfer that will affect a family property forever. "There's still a lot of water to go under the bridge and land management decisions to be made in partnership within the terms of the easement," he said.

County officials, too, see advantages to the program. For example, Jefferson County Commission Chairman Leonard Wortman has voiced support for a 7,000-acre easement recently completed for the Keogh Ranch north of Whitehall.

"I can't see anything but benefits to the whole area," he said. "The project was an excellent idea and location."

This, then, is how conservation easements work. They do not take land out of private ownership and do not reduce county taxes. The easement terms are voluntarily agreed upon by both parties—a true partnership. ■



MIKE BARLOW

THERE

by SCOTT WALDIE

illustration by DARRELL DAVIS

IT WASN'T THE KIND OF DAY that made you think of going for a bike ride, but there, heading south on Main Street, pedaled a small boy. He was dressed for the sleet in nothing but a T-shirt. His legs poked through at the tattered knees of his pants with every pump he made against a bitter wind. Trailing beneath his pedals, the long threads of his ragged jeans dripped with melting snow. Behind him he towed two Radio Flyers loaded with laundry.

The anomalous sight of the boy and his bike did cause me to wonder, but I was in the midst of a small remodeling job at the front of the fly shop. I was running behind, as usual, so I only puzzled over the kid barely dressed in a snowstorm for a moment; you know the thought: *Where is his mother and what is she thinking about?* Then it was back to the carpentry.

In the hands of an accomplished woodworker, the job might have taken three days, four tops. But I had been on the project for more than a week and, given what I had been able to build already, I was pretty sure I could estimate an approximate completion date of sometime in the unforeseeable future. Tools don't exactly leap into my hands. I am not a pretty sight with a hammer and nail.

An hour or two later, I was in the middle of an attempt to triangulate a multiple miter-cut, trying to divide uneven fractions so I could trim some moldings to the right length—

moldings I had already mis-cut too short to begin with—and I was using a saw that I have never really been that sure of, when the boy bicycled past the

shop window once more: his return trip from the laundromat. This time he pedaled up my sidewalk and I got a closer look.

The boy's face was pale save for the reddened cheeks. His lips were a bluish-white; a pair of oversize eyes watered in the bitter wind. His bare arms were thin and mottled by the cold; it was an unfamiliar face. (If you live in a town like Twin Bridges, Montana, population 400, you know most of the faces.) Understandably he looked miserable—sad to the point of troubled, a look that maybe anybody who has spent much time in a laundromat would understand.

The wagons squeaked and rattled past, a few feet away, just on the other side of the glass. I would say rolled past, but there wasn't a matching wheel on either of the Flyers, so they sort of wobbled by. The laundry, done and folded, sort of, was in no danger of blowing out into the street for the loads were secured by a pair of bricks. A piece of cardboard, taped

THERE WERE SERIOUS TROUBLES IN MICHAEL'S LIFE. HE DIDN'T COMPLAIN, BUT IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG TO READ THE WORRY IN HIS EYES. IN A BOY AGE NINE, YOU WANT TO SEE EYES FULL OF DAYDREAMS, BASEBALL, FROGS AND FISHING, NOT WORRY.

to the back fender of the bike, kept the spray from his rear tire off the clean clothes. This wasn't his first trip to the laundromat.

The bike didn't suffer from any original parts either; it was a combination of modifications held together by wire and tape. He had fused the components of many bikes into one and, though it was far from symmetrical, it seemed to pedal OK.

I waved, but he didn't see me.

The boy was no sooner out of sight when in through the front door came Pat Darbs, "The Darbs"—fly tier deluxe but makes his living as a carpenter and furniture maker; a woodsmith, a craftsman, just the man I wanted to see.

"D-a-a-arbs," I greeted him. Darbs is sort of the fly shop's version of N-o-o-orm, and is greeted the same way. Darbs is a regular and he headed to the coffee machine the same way his famous counterpart heads for the corner stool.

Darbs looked up and grinned as he stirred in the sugar. He gave my carpentry work a cursory inspection, then looked at the pile of badly cut pine at my feet.

"Doin' some woodwork?" he asked through a smile that read, *What did that poor tree ever do to you?*

His arrival was timely. Maybe Darbs could give me some pointers—better yet, some help. Wood in my hands turns to lumber, not the noun but the verb. In Darbs' hands boards become batons, two-by-fours flow into place, everything fits.

"You have any real fine elk hair?" he asked and headed for my tying desk in the corner of the store. He knew in which drawer to look, as he had built the desk.

"Did you see that kid with the wagons?" I asked.

"The kid towing clothes?"

"Yeah."

"Wonder what that kid's mother is thinking about. It's damn cold out there." Darbs shook his head, then found a piece of fur just the right color. "Weatherman says it's gonna start warmin' up. Supposed to stay that way a while too. The hatch should be right on schedule."

(Author's note: The hatch Darbs meant is the Mother's Day caddis hatch on the Ruby River; you can almost set your watch by it. My favorite time to be out fishing. Mother's Day was the next weekend.)

Darbs warmed up his cup of coffee. Then, sticking the elk into his pocket, he started for the door.

"I'd like to stay and help ya, but I've had this day planned all week. Got some cold ones in the fridge. Gonna sit back and tie up some flies. Gonna watch the Atlanta Braves. I love Saturdays." He then paused for another look at my work. "You'll get 'er done, Scotty. I just hope I'll still be around to see it." Then he bundled his coat tighter and went back into the cold.

I knew Darbs was right; by next weekend the fishing

would be great. I knew I had to really get after it. So I worked nights, I took short lunches, I worked faster than I ever had. I wasn't going to miss the definitive dryfly day of the year because I had to stay inside and paint—that would be too painful.

Well, I knocked out that two-day job in six—six and a half to be precise—and the following weekend, almost to the hour, the boy from Saturday last, the bicycle kid, came through the shop door.

I was mopping up, vacuuming sawdust, cleaning paint brushes. I was hating it, but the tedium of making things tidy was lessened by prescience: I knew exactly where I was going to be at two o'clock—Silver Spring Ranch. And the weatherman had been right, a rarity in southwest Montana: The afternoon's temperatures were sure to range from just right to ideal.

I greeted the boy with a hello, he greeted me back by getting right to the point. The look in his eye was of determination, but in a voice so shy it lacked only the hiss of a whisper, he asked, "You need any help around here, mister?"

This was expressed not by a boy who simply wanted some spending money, but by a person who needed a job. He was thin, painfully thin. His face wasn't the face you expected to see on a young boy; it was troubled. It was a face that could use a little laughter.

"How old are you?" I asked.

"Nine," he answered.

"What's your name?"

"Michael."

"Well, Michael, maybe I could use some help." A spark of enthusiasm arced in a sad pair of eyes. "Let's see," I said, grabbing a Coke from the refrigerator and handing it to him. He took it, thanked me, but he didn't smile.

"Do you own your own car?" I asked.

"No." His face puzzled up.

"You have a social security number?"

"No," he answered, growing slightly impatient with my questions, which were only intended to make him laugh.

"Have you ever been arrested?"

"No!" He was visibly frustrated.

Nothing was going to make Michael laugh; usually kidding a kid works. But I wasn't going to give up. One more attempt. I tried my combination of Jabberwocky and Jerry Lewis, a proven laugh getter with nine-year-olds.

"OK, I do have a job. I need someone to spanner a winnelpreg on my creedesvance so my transmogulator will once again be able to mahaliaprope." Then I grabbed my sunglasses and cap, putting the cap on sideways and the glasses on upside down, and added, "Do you cognify my soliference?"



That worked. I got a laugh, but it was a short one. Then his face was instantly somber: "Really, Mister, I need to find a job."

"All right, I have a job. How are you at mowing a lawn?"

"I don't know. I never tried it."

I grabbed a yardstick and headed for the door, motioning Michael to follow me.

"Well, yardwork, my boy," I said in my best W.C. Fields, "yardwork is decidedly something best approached by someone who has never tried it before. I've got the lawn mower but lack the inclination." I rested the yardstick on my shoulder as Fields rested his cane and copied W.C.'s patented shtick where he misses his head with his skimmer and hangs it on his cane; looks all over for it; finally recoils, fingers splayed, at the shock of finding it on the tip of his stick. That time I got a belly laugh.

Before we could get down to the business of mowing the lawn—temperamental mower, grasscatcher, gas and oil and all—there was lunch to think about. I asked Michael if he'd like to join me for a cheeseburger down at the Blue Anchor. I also asked if that would be agreeable with his mother.

"She won't care," he said. I looked at his shirt, ragged and outgrown. I looked at his hair, face and elbows, which hadn't seen much soap and water lately. I looked into a pair of unhealthy eyes. I found her not caring easy to believe.

We headed down to the Anchor, where I watched a small boy eat two orders of fries, suck down his shake and part of mine, and ingest a substantial piece of apple pie. But he ate only half his hamburger. The other half he folded into his napkin, explaining that it was for his younger sister. He was nine years old, hungry, yet he thought of his sister at home.

While we ate I found out why. At his house Michael took care of the laundry, the shopping, the cooking and his six-year-old sister; at home Michael was in charge. His mother was too ill to be much help. He wasn't sure where his father was, hadn't heard from him in a couple years.

There were serious troubles in Michael's life. He didn't complain, but it didn't take long to read the worry in his eyes. In a boy age nine, you want to see eyes full of daydreams, baseball, frogs and fishing, not worry.

We were walking back to the shop when the Darbs drove past. He gave me a wave from the window and I shouted back, "I'll be out there in a while."

Darbs signaled that he would be out there too.

THERE: THE ANGLER'S NOUN. You can be *near* there, or *around* there, or *by* there, but there's no place like there; no feeling like being there. Every fisherman has one, a there. "There" is seldom a generality; instead it's a precise footing on a bend, or a riffle where every willow, current and cloud is in place. Easily dreamed, you can get

"there" from an easy chair or on a downtown bus. "There" is an exact passage from a fisherman's back pages: virtual reality without the goggles. "There" is the reason for being here.

"Where you guys goin'?" Michael asked.

"Going fishing," I answered, bringing me back from there and to the reality of Main Street.

"Where?"

"There...er, ah, out on the Ruby."

Well, when I said the word "fishing" you'd have thought I somehow managed to get Christmas, birthdays, Disneyland, puppies, candy and ice cream all into one word. Michael lit up.

"I've never been fishin' before. Will you take me? Pleeeeezzzze!" Michael was hopping from one foot to the other and nearly shouting.

There is a place where I go alone. When I think of it, no one else is in the picture. There is a selfish moment; an afternoon stolen from time and without an accomplice. There is purposeful: solace, quiet, myself. But Michael was a boy in dire need of a there.

"What about your mother? You've got to ask her."

"Awww, she took her medicine an hour ago. She's gonna be asleep till at least 6." That had to be some kind of medicine.

"Who's going to take care of your sister?"

"She's at Lea Ballou's birthday party. They went to Bozeman to the museum and then they're gonna go to Pizza Hut and then they're gonna go and see *Star Wars*." His face contorted in envy. "She's s-o-o-o lucky."

"Well, you have to be home today, it's Mother's Day."

"Awww, she don't care."

(Author's note: If it looks to the reader like I am trying to get out of taking the boy fishing, it's only because I was. I mean, I like kids, but not necessarily on the best dryfly fishing of the year; and then I like them about the same as W.C.—"I love the patter of tiny feet—moving away from me." But not even W.C. could have turned Michael down. He was alone on the street when the rest of Twin Bridges was home celebrating Mother. And his sister was off in childhood heaven, eating pizza and watching Spielberg.)

I remember thinking, *This is the kid who only five minutes earlier wrapped up half his sandwich and saved it for his sister. This is a degree of integrity you don't expect from a nine-year-old. This kid had earned a day of fishing on anybody's scale. Mowing the lawn could wait.*

I made him run home to try to tell his mother. If she was too sick, he was to leave her a note I had written, which gave her the phone number of Jay and Arlene Barnosky, the owners of Silver Spring Ranch. Then she'd know where he was and with whom. I also wrote down the phone number of

Verta Dorseth, Michael's teacher, in case his mother wanted to check into my character. Verta lives next door to the shop; Michael only two blocks down. That's the great thing about small towns—everybody knows who and what belongs together. Nobody much worries about locking their doors and none of our kids end up on milk cartons.

THEN MICHAEL, ANNIE THE WONDER LAB and I were southbound out of town. Things were just like they were supposed to be: not a trace of cloud, not a hint of wind, save for the wind rushing through our windows with the smell of spring sage. Michael and I each had a Pepsi and a Snickers and as we drove we talked. We talked about W.C. Fields and Spielberg, fishing and flies, the Ruby, brown trout, caddis and, as we drove up to the river, we were discussing catch-and-release. It was a concept Michael had some trouble with. He understood it from the ecological point of view, but he knew hunger firsthand and he wanted to keep everything.

But I won out and we agreed to let everything go, and everything was sure to reach double digits.

When we rolled up, the river was alive with caddis, olives and the first few Pale Morning Duns. Trout nosed in the current, next to the current, and nowhere near the current. A Helen Keller fishery. This would be a day—and what a great first “there” for one small boy. I could see the roof of Darbs’ truck through the willows. He’d be far upstream.

We stepped into the creek, me in my waders, he in his jeans. In the deep places I carried him on my back. He was fairly tall, but he didn’t weigh anything at all.

For the afternoon it worked like this: I would hook them and he would land them, and during the next several hours we got a bunch of brown trout. Quite a few were around 15 inches. We hadn’t moved any of the big boys, but Michael didn’t seem to care. He was carefree, he was laughing; passports to being “there.”

We were a couple of bends down from where Silver Spring joins the Ruby when I saw rings, the heavy, slow swells of a big brown. Even Michael could read those rings: a trout unlike anything of the day, a trout most serious.

When I see rings like those, I am hypnotized by the allure, the chance, the thrill of the gamble, the dice that roll on these silvered waves—roll to the willows, roll to disappear upstream against the current, to be lost downstream in the riffle. Rings are the epicenter of my own personal “there.”

For that moment I forgot everything, I forgot everybody. I made my cast. My fly landed precisely. I would be careful. I would be patient, and I would hook my fish. I felt a tug at my sleeve, the tug that brought back the fact that I was not alone. I didn’t have to look down, I knew what the face looked like.

It would ask, “Remember the deal? You hook ‘em and I land ‘em?” I had no defense. A deal is a deal.

The fly swam near a branch, twitching but drag-free, riding the lacy edges of the current. The brown took and the fight was on.

I’ll never forget that scene. The fish ran and rounded the bend. Michael and I went after him and we fought that fish from the deep water. Michael riding piggy-back, we played that trout four-handed. His hands above mine, I would tell him when to pull back on the rod while I handled the line and the grip. I could feel the power of the fish. I could feel the water seeping over the tops of my waders. But most of all I could feel his ribs against my back. I could feel his laughter.

We followed the brown upstream, then we followed him back down. The trout jumped, rolled, ran, and every burst and whirl was met by Michael’s laughter, which I could also feel.

THAT AFTERNOON, NOW SOME 10 years ago, I value as much as any. We bested that brown trout. I remember looking at the fish as one of my best times and Michael looking at it as a meal for three. We had to have the catch-and-release talk all over again, and we did let the fish go. I convinced him not by reason, as there is no reason against hunger; I won by promising to buy some barbecued chicken on the way home.

Then I insisted on meeting his mother and I found out about Michael’s life. They lived in an old trailer, where Michael’s mother conducted her illness of alcohol and pills. Some people are not meant to be parents; some people are not even meant to be.

Still, that was a summer of “theres” for Michael. I saw to it. We went canoeing there, we went fishing there, we shared Spielberg’s sense of there, and we ate pizza everywhere.

Michael’s now 19. He’ll be in the service for the next four years, then in college. College will be a snap for him; straight A’s in high school. He now lives in Kansas but we keep in touch. This is a boy who could have easily gone down in drugs. I think, and Michael agrees, that some of his success can be attributed to being shown a few “theres” at an early age.

I didn’t write this story to ring my own chimes. I am much closer to W.C. Fields than to Father Flanagan. It was just by a series of circumstances I was able to show Michael the alternative: “there,” the reward for the sometimes not-so-pleasant reality of here and now. I wish there was a way to take all children there. I know it’s idealistic, a dream, but I know that once children are shown, and have shared, a there, they may realize their worth and their reason. ■

The Big Hole River Salmonfly Hatch and Western Tanager Show

by LEO KEANE



MacSalmon. Sofa Pillow. Stimulator. Troth Stone.
 Bitch Creek. Woolly Bugger. Ah, these words ring like
 music in my ears. They are: (a) some of the latest rock bands,
 (b) far out
 snowboards, (c) hip
 new threads for
 teens, or (d) essential
 fly patterns for June
 Big Hole River
 brown trout?



AL TROTH

Ding! You
 got it! Yes, it is nearly June, time once again for "The Big Hole
 River Salmonfly Hatch and Western Tanager Show." Pack up
 the babies and grab the old fly pole, hitch on the drift boat and
 throw in the camping gear. It's salmonfly time on the Big
 Hole!

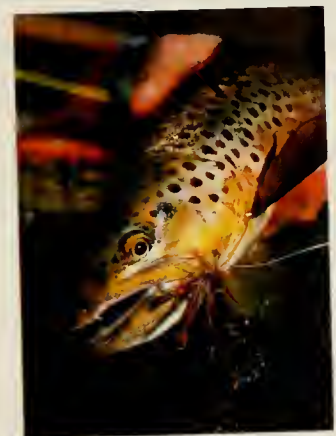


DAVE BOOKS

Oh, by the
 way, don't forget
 your long johns.
 And heavy wool
 socks. Probably
 your thickest pile
 hat. Also
 something

impenetrable to wind-driven sleet, like a neoprene body suit or
 that waxed canvas rain parka they make in Scotland, with hood.
 Mittens. And all the rest of
 your survival gear. Just in
 case, we always go prepared for
 warm, sunny days, too: shorts
 and sunscreen and jaunty fly
 fishing caps, and who knows,
 one of these years we might
 actually wear them.

Little need either for that



DUSAN SMETANA

PERSPECTIVES

wispy four-weight rod. And those fluffy dry flies of the sun-dappled days: your Pale Morning Dun, your Parachute Adams. Forget it. These guys will just get blown off into the cottonwoods or sucked up in a whirlpool. The Big Hole River in June spells Big Water and Big Weather.

We've been struck by lightning, blasted with hail, marooned in rainstorms. We've seen huge cottonwoods uprooted and pushed into the river. We've been blown upstream. And then when the weather really turns bad we've even been forced to retreat shoreward and crawl *under* our boats.

Yet invariably the storm clouds recede over yonder mountains. The wind settles down. Then we'll creep out from under our boats and blink in the mid-day sun. We'll slip back into the river and slide away. The cottonwoods glisten. The air is pungent with sage. We're casting again, lapping the water with our big wet flies, rolling along on the belly of the river.

And then it happens. A salmonfly,



PAUL UDDIKE



PHIL FARNES

incongruously large, takes flight from its green sanctuary in the willows. As the air warms, another, and another, takes wing till the canyon is a haze of salmonflies. Their

fluttering wings are translucent on the blue sky, and they seem as big as birds. Hey, wait a minute, that one *was* a bird!

As if the river, the weather, and the salmonflies aren't beauty enough, these luscious birds—western tanagers, in all their tropical glory—sweep from the trees to begin the feast of

the salmonfly hatch. This is the moment we've been waiting for.

Trout leap around our boat. Our casts are straight and true and our big Sofa Pillows mimic perfectly the growing armada of naturals bouncing down the river. Browns and rainbows are slurping up everything. The forest drifts by. Above us, the green canopy is alive with birds: the beautiful western tanagers, and now, too, orioles and vireos, warblers and flycatchers. They glimmer like jewels and whistle their songs and dash again and again over the river to catch another salmonfly.

This, too, is all we've come to catch: this crystal moment, adrift on this sparkling river, watching once again the performance of the salmonflies and songbirds. ■

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION SECURES CRITICAL BITTERROOT VALLEY WINTER RANGE

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) has cooperated with a Bitterroot Valley landowner to protect several thousand acres of critical elk habitat under a conservation easement.

Located a few miles east of Hamilton, the Mildenerger Ranch—formerly known as the Bitterroot Stock Farm—provides habitat for one of the largest concentrations of elk that winter in the Bitterroot Valley. Owners Harold and Brad Mildenerger chose to place a conservation easement on about 3,900 acres of the farm in the areas of the Gird Creek and St. Clair Creek drainages.

Today, many landowners have begun turning to conservation easements as a way to perpetually protect the wildlife values on their land and still maintain ownership. No matter who may own the property in the future, the habitat will never fall prey to the uncontrolled subdivision and development that has eaten up so much of the West's elk country, as an easement becomes a permanent part of the deed.

Ron Marcoux, RMEF group manager for Conservation Programs, said, "Conservation easements provide an opportunity to protect our key elk ranges. We appreciate working with landowners like Harold and Brad Mildenerger who are sensitive to the needs of wildlife. We are hopeful that we can help conserve more of the Bitterroot Valley's winter range, and encourage other interested landowners to work with us to protect this precious wildlife heritage."

While protecting critical winter range for 300 to 400 elk, the easement on the ranch allows the Mildenergers to retain rights to future development of four home sites. They may also continue traditional uses on the land, such as cattle grazing and timber harvest, so long as those uses remain compatible with the protection and



Detail from "Elk Camp" by Allen Jimmerson © 1995

enhancement of wildlife habitat. The right to control access for hunting or any other use of the property also remains with the landowners.

Not only does this property offer wonderful wildlife values, but it also carries a rich history. In the late 1800s, Montana copper king Marcus Daly founded the farm to raise and train racehorses. Although he died before the famed Daly Mansion was completed,

his widow saw the building through to completion. The farm eventually ended up with Daly's granddaughter, Countess Margit Besseney, who maintained it until her death. For more than 30 years, hunting on the farm was prohibited, resulting in a haven for large numbers of elk, which began roaming the property for longer and longer periods each year. After Besseney's death in October 1984, her

stepson, Francis, inherited the farm, giving the mansion and 50 surrounding acres to the state. In 1990, he put the rest of the farm up for sale.

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is an international, nonprofit conservation organization whose mission is to ensure the future of elk, other wildlife and their habitat. Founded in 1984, the RMEF now has

98,000 members who have helped generate more than \$35 million to conserve and enhance 1.8 million acres of wildlife habitat. The RMEF is headquartered in Missoula, Montana.

For more information on how you can help protect wildlife habitat, call 1-800-CALL ELK.—*Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation*



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks will sponsor an outdoor skills workshop for women this summer from August 16 to 18 at the Beartooth Mountain Christian Ranch in the Absaroka-Beartooth Mountains south of Columbus, Montana. The workshop will include courses in animal tracking, archery and bowhunting, Dutch-oven cooking, survival and first-aid techniques, horse packing, flytying, basic gun handling, flyfishing, canoeing, backpacking, orienteering, and rifle and shotgun shooting. The objective is to provide an atmosphere where women can have fun learning skills that will enhance their enjoyment of the outdoors.

Registration is limited and classes fill quickly. Women interested in attending should contact Liz Lodman as soon as possible at: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620; (406) 444-2615.

SHIKAR-SAFARI CLUB AWARD GOES TO TERRY ALTHAUS

Terry Althaus, a Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks game warden based in Philipsburg, has been named the 1995 recipient of the prestigious Shikar-Safari Club International's Wildlife Officer of the Year award for Montana.

The Shikar-Safari award winner is selected by the director of FWP from among nominations submitted by warden captains in each of FWP's administrative regions. Althaus was recognized for, among many attributes, his dedicated contribution to Montana's resources and the people who enjoy them.

The Shikar-Safari award, which is presented annually by the worldwide conservation organization to one wildlife law enforcement officer in each state, has been presented to a Montana game warden each year since 1969.



MILDENBERGER FAMILY PRESERVES LEGACY

We are very pleased with the arrangement made with the RMEF and with the excellent support and assistance of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Both organizations have been instrumental in reaching this decision of which we are extremely proud to be a part. We believe this easement will ensure long-term benefit to the elk and their habitat in the St. Clair and Gird Creek drainages. Over the years we have had great pleasure watching this magnificent herd (of animals), and we are glad to know this agreement will help ensure their future.

We have lived in the Bitterroot all of our lives, enjoying the beauty of this valley. We are sure few, if any, have not looked to the Sapphire Range seeing the great beauty and feeling a sense of peace. Apparently the elk and wildlife also find this the idyllic home. As hunters, we realize the importance of preserving and managing these herds. Being ranchers and businessmen, we are only too well aware of

the need for protecting our lands and keeping some open space—leaving some of the land as God created it for all to view and know that for perpetuity it will remain.

Marcus Daly worked to put this ranch together over 100 years ago. Margaret Besseney continued the legacy as did Francis Besseney. It only seems appropriate that we, too, try to continue this legacy and preserve this land for all generations to come.—*Harold Mildenerger*

ROD & GUN CLUB OPENS DOORS TO LANDOWNERS

The spirit of cooperation advanced by Governor Marc Racicot's Private Land/Public Wildlife Advisory Council has spilled over at the Billings Rod & Gun Club, where privileges to use the club's elaborate shooting range have been extended to any Montana landowner enrolled in the state's Block Management Program.

"We're doing it because we appreciate the private landowners who provide hunting access under the Block Management Program," said John Gibson, president of the Billings Rod & Gun Club. "We feel they represent our last best hope to keep Montana's heritage of hunting on private land alive without resorting to fee hunting."

Montana's popular Block Management Program annually provides hunters access to more than five million acres of private land. This year, under changes created by House Bill 195, which was passed into law by the 1995 Legislature, the Block Management Program will be expanded. Under the expanded program, new incentives for landowners will be funded by the sale of variable-priced, outfitter-sponsored nonresident hunting licenses (see "A Minor Montana Miracle," *Montana Outdoors*, November/December 1995).

"We're not concerned about the fact that they get compensated for impacts from allowing hunters on their land," Gibson said. "That's not fee hunting. This kind of program counters fee hunting. This program is designed to compensate for the impacts hunters make. To us that's a big difference."

The expanded Block Management Program is expected to eventually increase public access to up to an additional two to four million acres of private lands that were previously closed to public hunting or have the potential to be leased for private use. House Bill 195 is based on 20 recommendations made by the Governor's Private Land/Public Wildlife Advisory Council. The bipartisan legislative support the recommendations received was hailed as a "minor miracle" by Governor Racicot. The bill seeks to further public hunting access to private

lands while recognizing and providing relief to landowners for the potential impacts of that access.

"I was at the dinner table the evening John Gibson and the block management landowner came up with this idea," said Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Director Pat Graham. "I think it's a wonderful idea and an honest, neighborly gesture on the part of the Billings Rod & Gun Club. It's great to see cooperation breaking out instead of confrontation."

The Billings Rod & Gun Club's shooting range is widely recognized as

one of the best facilities of its kind in Montana. The club's membership fee of \$55 per year will be waived for block management cooperators and their immediate families, Gibson said. The club maintains a sporting clays course, traditional skeet and trap shooting ranges, rifle and pistol ranges, and two archery areas.

For more information on the Billings Rod & Gun Club offer to landowners, call John Gibson at (406) 656-0384; Harry Miller at (406) 248-5660; Grant Davis at (406) 652-6056; or John Collins at (406) 252-1646.

PAUL MIHALOVICH: A TRIBUTE

My early recollections of Paul were mostly based upon fear. After all, I was a teenager who loved hunting and fishing, and game wardens were always out there looking for an excuse to nab some unsuspecting adolescent. Besides, there were "stories" about him that I didn't care to be on the receiving end of. Looking back after 30 years, he (and his reputation) probably kept me more lawful than I would care to admit. Later on, those stories I had heard about him stirred my interest in the wildlife profession. I thank him for that.

Paul Mihalovich passed away on October 17, 1995, at his home in

Augusta, Montana. He retired in 1985, after 34 years of wildlife law enforcement with the department. My knowledge of Paul as a co-worker came during the last eight years of his career.



Paul Mihalovich

Several things about Paul come to mind. For instance, the index finger of his right hand had been somehow deformed so that it was permanently partly bent and partly straight, and you never really knew if he was pointing at you or just holding out his arm in an abstract gesture while telling a story. He used the finger in combination with a dry wit, which at times was both caustic and falling-down funny. Sometimes I had to look for the twinkle in his eyes to figure out if he was just kidding some unsuspecting soul.

It was always inspiring to attend regional meetings and see that Paul had arrived. The best fun was when he didn't approve of a particular person or policy. Those in the know would wink and nod at each other, eager for the upcoming event. He could verbally "bait and snare" someone without them realizing it until it was too late, and all with good humor. And, there was always a point to be made.

Paul had a soft spot in his heart for the Rocky Mountain Front, the streams, lakes, and canyons that make up the Sun River country. Most of all, he loved wild animals and telling stories about grizzlies, sheep, elk, and all the others. He had a lifetime of experiences to share. Hunting and fishing, especially with his grandsons, until the end, he left his mark in a way that bolsters the flavor and tradition of a great piece of Montana.

Thanks again, Paul.—Gary Olson, *Wildlife Biologist, Region 4 (Great Falls)*

MONTANA'S FISHING LOG PROGRAM

by Jan Hughes

Fisheries Information Services

Fisheries Division, Region 3

Great day of fishing! Taking off my vest, I remember I have my fishing log in the inside pocket. Lots to record today—where I fished, what I caught, how big, the kind of day. Glancing at the previous days I've recorded this year, I see I've done pretty well so far. Actually, I haven't done too badly since I joined FWP's Fishing Log Program 10 years ago. In addition to helping department biologists, each book has special memories for me—the first time I took my daughter fishing at Hauser Lake; that horribly rainy, cold day in July when we were skunked at Handkerchief Lake; and the last time my dad went with us to that little mountain lake where we caught our limit in an hour, cooked them over an open fire, and told fishing stories till dark. Memories—my logs have lots of them—good, bad, fun, and sad.

This story is just one of many from anglers who have volunteered to record their fishing activities in logs issued by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP). The fishing log program came into being in 1951, the year the Dingell-Johnson program (Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration) started. When biologists needed better information on numbers and distribution of game fish across Montana, Chuck Phenicie, chief fisheries biologist, and Clint Bishop, fisheries project biologist, conceived the idea of having cooperating anglers keep diaries of their fishing success.

In the start-up year of the program, approximately 350 anglers kept logs; today, there are about 1,000 cooperators. Anglers record locations fished, dates, species and numbers caught, and miscellaneous information in their waterproof logs. They also record size if they feel a fish is unusually large for the water being fished.

Once a year, FWP recalls the logs so data the anglers have collected can be processed. Each log holder receives an annual newsletter containing a summary of the previous year's data, a region-by-region update of fishing activity, and interesting or unusual fishing-related articles.

The fishing log program was one of FWP's earliest encounters with automatic data processing. Compiling data in those days was tedious, for the data processing equipment, great as it was at the time, was primitive by today's standards. First, codes for the waters and fish species recorded in each log were handwritten on coding sheets; in turn, this information was transcribed with pencils onto special data cards.



Information from fishing logs has served the state's fisheries resources well. Here, Jan Hughes scans logs from some of the program's 1,000 cooperators.

These were sent to the local IBM service bureau for machine processing.

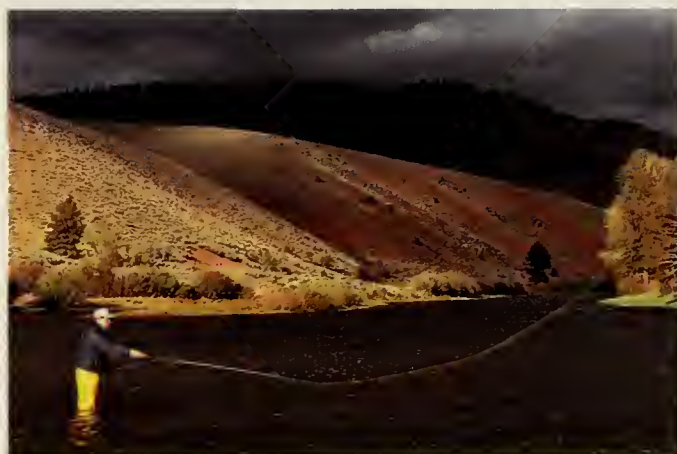
In 1954, FWP acquired its own IBM equipment. Department personnel keypunched information from the logs directly onto computer cards, eliminating the special data cards. Next, the computer cards were sorted, and sorted, and sorted—for hours, one column at a time, on a card sorter—until the information was organized. Then the cards were fed into a printer and a data sheet for each water was created. Over the years, computer processing of log data has been streamlined, but the concept is essentially the same as that designed by Phenicie and Bishop 36 years ago.

Information from fishing logs has served the department and the state's fisheries resources well. It was particularly valuable in the years following passage of the 1955 Water Pollution Act, which required that each lake and stream in the state receive a water quality classification. For some lakes and streams, information from fishing logs was all that was available, so when log holders reported catching trout, the water was classified as suitable for salmonids.

Last year we received a letter from a log holder who joined the program the year it started and has kept all of his books. He says he was amazed when he totaled up his catches over the 42-plus years and found that he had caught more than 13,000 trout! His log books showed that his best year was 1979 when he landed 663 trout. Of course, every trip out wasn't a success; as he noted after fishing the Jefferson River one day: "caught only moss."

Another log holder who lives in Pennsylvania but comes to Montana every year to fish the Madison River has kept detailed records since the 1970s. For each trip, he's computed his catch rate per hour by trout species and recorded the length of his fish. In the 1990s, his catch rate for rainbow trout decreased significantly, corresponding to the population decline that FWP biologists have recently linked to whirling disease. His logs have helped fisheries biologists determine the probable year the disease first invaded the river.

Any angler regardless of age can join the fishing log program. If you would like to participate, or if you know



SCOTT WHEELER

By keeping a fishing log, anglers can preserve their memories and help FWP biologists collect important data.

someone who would, please contact: Jan Hughes, Fisheries Information Services, FWP Building, MSU Campus, Bozeman, MT 59717-0323.

FISHERIES DIVISION HISTORY COMES TO LIFE

The history of fisheries management in Montana dates back to the late nineteenth century when the first Territorial Legislature of 1864 provided that "a rod or pole, line and hook, shall be the only lawful way trout can be caught in any of the streams of the territory." In 1896, a federal fish hatchery was established in Bozeman. This was followed by state hatcheries in Anaconda in 1908 and Somers in 1912, and numerous others across the state in the 1920s, '30s, and '40s.

To preserve this colorful era in

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks' history, Bill Alvord, former chief of fisheries and head of hatcheries, has written "A History of Montana's Fisheries Division from 1890 to 1958." This 96-page report contains a wealth of information on early fisheries activities, primarily stocking, during a time when fish were widely distributed by railroad car, truck, pack string, and eventually airplane.

For a free copy of the report, contact: Liane Taylor, Fisheries Division, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1420 E. Sixth Ave., Helena, MT 59620; (406) 444-3571.

BULL TROUT REPORTS AVAILABLE

Several status reports for bull trout populations in Montana are available for information and public comment. These reports have been prepared for 11 restoration/conservation areas:

- Bitterroot River.
- Lower Clark Fork River, downstream of Thompson Falls.
- Middle Clark Fork River from Thompson Falls to Milltown, including the lower Flathead River to Kerr Dam.
- Upper Clark Fork River, including

Rock Creek.

- Blackfoot River.
- Flathead Lake, including North and Middle Forks of the Flathead River, Stillwater River, and Whitefish River.
- South Fork of the Flathead River, upstream of Hungry Horse Dam.
- Swan Lake/River.
- Lower Kootenai River, below Kootenai Falls.
- Middle Kootenai River, between Kootenai Falls and Libby Dam.
- Upper Kootenai River/Lake Koocanusa, upstream of Libby Dam.

Two technical reports are also available: "The Role of Removal and Suppression of Introduced Fish in Bull Trout Recovery" and "The Role of Hatcheries and Fish Transplants in Bull Trout Recovery." A third technical report on habitat requirements of bull trout and the effects of land management on these requirements will be available in June.

To receive any of these reports or for further information on bull trout, contact: Bull Trout Restoration Team, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1420 E. Sixth Ave., Helena, MT 59620; (406) 444-3175.



FWP PHOTO

Fisheries workers take spawn at fish traps on the Madison River in the early 1930s.



Randy Townsend displays his state record walleye.

Fort Peck Reservoir Steals the Show

THE FERTILE WATERS of northeastern Montana's Fort Peck Reservoir have produced another state record fish—a 16.29-pound walleye—to go with records for several other species, including smallmouth bass, sauger, channel catfish, and chinook salmon.

When **Randy Townsend** got in the boat with partner Greg Pauley last October and headed for Timber Creek in the reservoir's Missouri Arm, he wasn't thinking about a record walleye. If he had been, he might have brought along something more substantial than an ultralight spinning rod with 4-lb.-test line, and he definitely would have remembered a net.

Despite the light tackle, Townsend eventually was able to work the big fish up to the boat. But getting it *into* the boat proved an even greater challenge. "My partner had to reach into the water and grab it," said Townsend. He missed it on the first try, but got it on the second."

Townsend, who lives in Acton, was using a chartreuse jig and minnow when he hooked the 33.5-inch walleye. "I didn't even know what the record walleye weighed, but my partner did," said Townsend. "At first we thought my fish might go about twelve pounds, but every time Greg lifted it, he got more and more excited. Finally we decided we'd better get it officially weighed."

Townsend's fish bested another record walleye taken from Fort Peck Reservoir earlier in 1995 by **Eric Thorpe**. Thorpe's fish weighed 15.63 pounds. The previous record walleye, a 14.88 pounder, was caught in the Yellowstone River near Miles City in 1989.

Because so many sauger and walleye records were being shattered in such rapid succession at Fort Peck in mid-1994 and early 1995, biologists began to question whether the increased size was due to the abundance of forage fish alone, or whether some hybridization was occurring. "Anglers

catching these fish were also curious about the phenomenal size," says Bill Wiedenheft, FWP fisheries manager for Region 6 (Glasgow). "So we began asking them to send their trophies to Robb Leary at the University of Montana for genetic testing." Using a process called electrophoresis, Leary can distinguish sauger from walleye by analyzing liver and muscle tissue samples for four proteins.

"Robb found that some of these new record fish were indeed walleye/sauger hybrids," says Wiedenheft. "A 15.66-pound fish caught by **Myron Kibler** in Fort Peck Reservoir in January of 1995 that appeared to be a walleye turned out to be a hybrid, or saugeye," he says. "So we've added the saugeye as a separate Montana fish records category beginning with 1995." Kibler now holds the saugeye record with his 15.66-pounder.

Because external features can't be relied on to determine species, or hybrids, in the genus *Stizostedion* (walleye and sauger), FWP policy now requires that new walleye, sauger, or saugeye records be verified by electrophoresis. "When one of these fish potentially qualifies as a new state record," explains Wiedenheft, "fisheries personnel will take the necessary muscle and liver tissue samples and send them to a lab for genetic testing."

Two additional fish records fell in 1995: Lewistown angler **Darren D. Johnson** caught a 0.30-pound Flathead chub in the Missouri River near the Fred Robinson Bridge, besting a chub caught in 1994 in the same locale. And **Edward Field**, of Sheridan, Wyoming, took a 2.44-pound white crappie through the ice at Tongue River Reservoir, edging out a 2.38-pound specimen taken from the same water in 1990. Field caught his crappie using a minnow on a chartreuse ice jig.—*Dave Books*

MONTANA'S RECORD-SETTING FISH (1995)

SPECIES	WEIGHT	ANGLER	YEAR	LOCATION
Arctic grayling	3.21 lbs.	Frederick C. Dahl	1994	Handkerchief Lake
Bigmouth buffalo	57.75 lbs.	Craig D. Grassel	1994	Nelson Reservoir
Black bullhead	2.33 lbs.	Darwin Zempel, Jr.	1994	Lower Flathead River
Black crappie	3.13 lbs.	Al Elser	1973	Tongue River Reservoir
Blue sucker	11.46 lbs.	Doug Askin	1989	Yellowstone River (near Miles City)
Bluegill	2.64 lbs.	Brent Fladmo	1983	Peterson's Stock Dam
Brook trout	9.06 lbs.	John R. Cook	1940	Lower Two Medicine Lake
Brown trout	29.00 lbs.	E.H. "Peck" Bacon	1966	Wade Lake
Bull trout	25.63 lbs.	James Hyer	1916	unknown
Burbot (ling)	17.08 lbs.	Jeff E. Iwen	1989	Missouri River (near Wolf Point)
Carp	38.50 lbs.	Don Bagley	1986	Eyraud Lakes
Channel catfish	25.89 lbs.	Gordon Wentworth	1984	Fort Peck Reservoir
		Tom Hilderman (tie)	1988	Fort Peck Reservoir
Chinook (king salmon)	31.13 lbs.	Carl L. Niles	1991	Fort Peck Reservoir
Cisco	1.46 lbs.	Jim Liebelt	1990	Dredge Cut Trout Pond
Coho salmon	4.88 lbs.	Irven Stohl	1973	Fort Peck Reservoir
Cutthroat trout	16.00 lbs.	William D. Sands	1955	Red Eagle Lake
Flathead chub*	0.30 lbs.	Darren Johnson	1995	Missouri River (Fred Robinson Bridge)
Freshwater drum	20.44 lbs.	Richard C. Lee	1987	Fort Peck Reservoir
Golden trout	4.90 lbs.	Carl Radonski	1993	Lightning Lake
Goldeye	2.91 lbs.	Vance "Bubba" Kielb	1989	Irrigation canal (west of Malta)
Green sunfish	0.56 lbs.	Roger Fliger	1991	Castle Rock Reservoir
Kokanee (salmon)	5.94 lbs.	Forrest Johnson	1976	Pishkun Reservoir
Lake trout	42.00 lbs.	Dave Larson	1979	Flathead Lake (east shore)
Lake whitefish	10.00 lbs.	Ruby Mutch	1986	Lower St. Mary Lake
Largemouth bass	8.16 lbs.	Juanita A. Fanning	1984	Milnor Lake
Longnose sucker	3.27 lbs.	Ray Quigley	1988	Marias River
Mountain whitefish	5.09 lbs.	Mervin "Frog" Fenimore	1987	Kootenai River
Northern pike	37.50 lbs.	Lance Moyler	1972	Tongue River Reservoir
Northern squawfish	7.88 lbs.	Darrel Torgimson	1991	Noxon Rapids Reservoir
Paddlefish	142.50 lbs.	Larry Branstetter	1973	Missouri River
Peamouth	0.64 lbs.	Gordon Stewart	1991	Ashley Creek
Pumpkinseed	0.95 lbs.	Tim Colver	1985	Milnor Lake
Pygmy whitefish	0.16 lbs.	Orlin Iverson	1982	Ashley Lake
Rainbow trout	29.02 lbs.	Stanley Ross	1991	Kootenai River (David Thompson Bridge)
Rainbow-cutthroat hybrid	30.25 lbs.	Pat Kelly	1982	Ashley Lake
River carpsucker	3.50 lbs.	James Jessen	1991	Yellowstone River near Terry
Rock bass	0.57 lbs.	Don Holzheimer	1989	Tongue River Reservoir
Sauger	8.81 lbs.	Gene Moore	1994	Fort Peck Reservoir
Saugeye**	15.66 lbs.	Myron Kibler	1995	Fort Peck Reservoir
Shorthead redhorse sucker	4.68 lbs.	Ray Quigley	1985	Marias River near Loma
Shortnose gar	3.06 lbs.	John Johnson	1977	Fort Peck dredge cuts
Shovelnose sturgeon	13.72 lbs.	Sidney L. Storm	1986	Missouri River
Smallmouth bass	6.09 lbs.	Terry L. Druyvestein	1990	Fort Peck Reservoir
Smallmouth buffalo	32.63 lbs.	Richard Liesener	1994	Nelson Reservoir
Stonecat	0.42 lbs.	Robert M. Garwood	1985	Milk River at Havre
Tiger muskellunge	27.00 lbs.	Dan Dupea	1994	Lebo Lake
Utah chub	1.81 lbs.	Eugene Bastian	1992	Canyon Ferry Reservoir
Walleye*	16.29 lbs.	Randy Townsend	1995	Fort Peck Reservoir
White bass	1.13 lbs.	Ludwig Dubbe	1986	Fort Peck dredge cuts
White crappie*	2.44 lbs.	Edward Field	1995	Tongue River Reservoir
White sturgeon	96.00 lbs.	Herb Stout	1968	Kootenai River
White sucker	5.33 lbs.	Fred Perry	1983	Nelson Reservoir
Yellow bullhead	0.72 lbs.	Wade Fredenberg	1987	Yellowstone River
Yellow perch	2.37 lbs.	Vernon Schmid	1988	Ashley Lake

*New Montana record for 1995

**New to Montana's record list

MONTANA STATE PARKS CALENDAR

MAY

"Discovery Days" at Lone Pine State Park

Day camps for children begin in May, as well as outings for seniors and special new programs. Call (406) 755-2706.

Motorboat Testing at Lake Elmo State Park

Opportunity to test engines for the upcoming summer.

Testing will be done each weekend in May. Call (406) 247-2940.

4—Buzzard Day at Makoshika State Park

Fun runs, "turkey shoot," nature walks, and many activities for the whole family. Call (406) 365-6256.

11—Bannack State Park Visitor Center Opens

Hours are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Call (406) 834-3413.

11—KiteFest at Frenchtown Pond State Park

Festivities begin at 1:00 p.m. Call (406) 542-5500.

16-17—Spring Meadow Lake State Park Field Days

Fifth-grade school classes come to Spring Meadow to learn about natural resources. Call (406) 444-4720.

25—Lecture Series Begins at Bannack State Park

Saturday night lecture series features a variety of historical, recreational, and natural resource topics. Lectures begin at 7:00 p.m. Call (406) 843-3413.

25-26—Memorial Day Weekend "Loon and Fish Festival" in Seeley Lake

Art show, craft sale, guided bird walks, loon talks, and calling contest at Seeley Lake Community Center, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Call (406) 444-1276.

JUNE

1—Campfire Talks Begin at Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park

Saturday night talks feature historical, recreational, and resource topics. Talks begin at 8:30 p.m. Call (406) 287-3541.

5—Nature Movies at Lone Pine State Park

Movies will be shown at the visitor center from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Call (406) 755-2706.

6—Campfire Presentations Begin at Makoshika State Park

Thursday night talks include paleontology, geology, and history. Call (406) 365-6256.

8—"Out to Lunch" at Fort Owen State Park

Bring a bag lunch and enjoy a historical program about Montana's first white settlement.

28-30—Lewis and Clark Encampment at Giant Springs State Park

Living interpretation of the portage around Great Falls with a variety of historical activities for all ages, including plays, buffalo barbeque, lectures, tours, and float trips. Call (406) 454-5840.

29—"Shoot or Don't Shoot" at Council Grove State Park

Bring your camera and learn the techniques of taking good outdoor photographs. Call (406) 542-5500.

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MONTANA OUTDOORS VIDEO

For an annual subscription price of \$25, you'll receive three videos, one video every fall, winter, and spring. Each video explores several high-profile issues that fuel FWP's actions and policies. For example, past Montana Outdoors Videos have featured in-depth reports on whirling disease, wolves, hunting opportunities, and state parks.

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HUNTING ADVENTURES WORLDWIDE, by Jack Atcheson, Sr., Jack Atcheson & Sons, Inc., 3210 Ottawa St., Butte, MT 59701; 1995, 256 pages, hard cover, \$29.95 plus \$4.00 postage.

Many years ago, Jack O'Connor told Jack Atcheson, Sr., that he "ought to write a book" about his hunting adventures. But Atcheson, a Montana-based hunting consultant, was too busy at the time booking hunts for clients around the world, and pursuing his own passion for big game hunting in places like Africa, Asia, Europe, Alaska, and Canada.

Luckily for us, at age 63, Atcheson finally found time to take O'Connor's advice. The result is an entertaining collection of stories that will have you on the edge of your chair one minute and laughing out loud the next. Whether your tastes run toward facing an angry Alaskan brown bear at point-blank range or sharing a leaky boat with a "dead" crocodile that has suddenly come back to life, you'll enjoy tagging along with Atcheson and friends on some of their incredible adventures.

This book is an honest, straight-from-the-shoulder portrayal of big game hunting as it really is, written with humor and humility by a man who truly loves big game animals and the wild country they inhabit.

RINGNECK, published by Falcon Press in cooperation with Pheasants Forever, P.O. Box 1718, Helena, MT 59624 (1-800-582-2665); 1995, 120 pages, hard cover, \$29.50 plus \$4.25 shipping.

This large-format book, primarily a photographic celebration of the pheasant and its place in American sporting life, also includes quotes from notable outdoorsmen, an essay on hunting by Steve Grooms, and sections on the ringneck's history in this country and its ecology by Russ Sewell and Dave Nomsen. Grooms is an experienced hunter and conservationist who has written extensively on pheasants,

and Sewell and Nomsen work for Pheasants Forever, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protection and enhancement of pheasants and other wildlife throughout North America.

As Grooms says in his essay: "What a bird this is! Cocky and subtle. Smart and rugged. Explosive and fugitive. Clever, resourceful, and elusive. Courageous, wily, brassy, and unpredictable. And beautiful, too damned beautiful for words." Like its namesake, *Ringneck* is a book too beautiful for words.

FOOL HEN BLUES, by E. Donnell Thomas, Jr., Wilderness Adventures Press, P.O. Box 1410, Bozeman, MT 59771 (1-800-925-3339); 1994, 185 pages, hard cover, \$30.00 plus \$4.00 shipping.

This collection of stories by Lewistown resident E. Donnell Thomas takes the reader on a wingshooting odyssey from the Kenai Peninsula of Alaska to the high plains of central Montana. Pheasants and Huns, sage grouse and sharptails, prairie ducks and tide flat geese—all are present in vignettes that feature black Labs, favorite bird covers, and shotguns.

Some of the stories are poignant, like the account of a last dove hunt with a high school buddy who later dies in Vietnam. Others have important things to say about tradition, family values, and respect for game animals. "The Essentials of Waterfowling," for example, is anything but a how-to primer on duck hunting: It begins this way: "Some years back I subscribed to a newsletter devoted to the subject of hunting ducks....The first issue I received was devoted to exploring the definition of a 'world class' duck hunt. There were several first-person descriptions of hunts in countries unfettered by the concept of limits, with cases of shells shot, multiple species taken, and guides groaning under the weight of the bag at the end of the day. I did not renew my subscription." For Thomas, "the pleasures are less likely to come from furious

shooting than from a few essential images, distilled to clarity and rendered with the simplicity of a single brush stroke."

MONTANA WILDLIFE VIEWING GUIDE, by Carol and Hank Fischer, Falcon Press, P.O. Box 1718, Helena, MT 59624 (1-800-582-2665); 1995, 112 pages, soft cover, \$9.95 plus \$3.00 shipping.

This guide has all the information you'll need for a memorable wildlife viewing trip—where to go, when to go, and what to look for. This new edition features 109 of Montana's best wildlife viewing areas. Included are detailed descriptions of each site and its wildlife, optimal viewing times, maps and directions, wildlife viewing tips, and beautiful color photographs of Montana's diverse wildlife.

BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB'S 22nd BIG GAME AWARDS—1992-1994, Edited by Jack and Susan Reneau, Boone and Crockett Club, 250 Station Drive, Missoula, MT 59801 (406-542-1888); 1995, 500 pages, hard cover, \$39.95 plus \$4.25 shipping.

Updated every three years, the Boone and Crockett Club's big game awards book offers hunters, wildlife biologists, and researchers the facts, figures, photographs, and detailed stories behind the finest North American big game trophies.

This issue of the awards book lists new world records for typical whitetail deer, Alaska-Yukon moose, and central Canada barren ground caribou, as well as 3,100 new big game entries in 31 categories. Included are the stories behind several new recordbook bighorn sheep from Montana, including those taken by James Weatherly, Richard Wiant, Eugene Knight, and Mavis Lorenz. It also tells how a dead ram found near Melrose, Montana, by Jack Atcheson, Jr., turned out to be one of the top bighorns in the world. This ram is now on permanent display at FWP headquarters in Bozeman.

SUNDAY OPENER FOR DEER AND ELK OPPOSED

Your nice "Our Point of View" and article "Young Hunters" in the November/December 1995 issue was read with tongue in cheek and again makes me wonder about your department.

Everything you say about young hunters, both boys and girls, enjoying their hunting time as a family, such as the fun, family tradition, and companionship is very true and will last all of them a lifetime.

Every year our children get Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday OFF school for teachers convention.

So in your infinite wisdom, what do you do? Open the season on Sunday on the last day of their vacation.

I have written your department three times about opening the season early enough so these children could spend all four days with their families hunting and being together and establishing "family values," as your article states.

You have answered all my letters with idle lip service. Now it is about time you read your own articles and act accordingly.—Ed Mitch, Dayton

The Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission has the difficult task of balancing biological and social considerations in the setting of hunting seasons. The general deer and elk season opens this year on October 27, but hunting for many other species (e.g., upland birds, waterfowl, antelope) is open prior to that time.—Editor

VETERAN BOWHUNTER STILL GOING STRONG

As I was reading the article "Seven Montanans Inducted Into Hunting Hall of Fame" (p. 31, March/April 1996 issue) I noticed a mistake concerning the length of my bowhunting career. The entry should have read, "Henry Schwenke of Sidney, a bowhunter since 1956" (not 1928).

Believe me, it was quite a thrill to be honored with that award. Dale A. Burk is my nephew and he has done a lot to help preserve our hunting, fishing, and

our forests, etc. I am now 83 years old and hope, in spite of arthritis, to be able to keep on bowhunting.—Henry A. Schwenke, Sidney

Mr. Schwenke and Mr. Burk were honored with Lifetime Achievement Awards and inducted into the Montana Hunting Hall of Fame last autumn. We apologize for the error.—Editor

MO DOMINATED BY MEN?

My husband grew up in Havre, Montana, and his parents gave us a subscription to *Montana Outdoors*. I am writing to take note of an article you published in your March/April 1996 issue: "Mama and the Bird," by Terri Adams.

First let me say "thank you" for publishing an article by a woman. Your publication is dominated by men, and I am very pleased to see you give one small article written by a woman some space in your publication. We need more articles by women!

But I am disappointed to see that her article is about hunting; or killing the wildlife. She brought into this world three boys, all of whom will quickly learn the joy of killing. Most of our wildlife in Colorado has been hunted—killed off. Please do not promote hunting. How can you justify this?

Thank you.—J. Riener, Cortez, CO

While it is true that the majority of the material we publish is submitted by men, the fact is there are many more men than women in the professions from which we draw our material: natural resource conservation, outdoor writing, and outdoor photography. This situation is gradually changing, and we hope it continues to change. We don't, however, agree that women are rarely represented in MO—a quick check of issues from the last five years shows a dozen articles written by women, several articles specifically about women, and numerous articles that apply equally to women and men. In

addition, about 30 women contributed photos during that period.

To hunt or not to hunt is a personal decision that each of us must make. But if Terri Adams' boys grow up to be hunters, it will not be for "the joy of killing"—it will be for the many other reasons so well articulated in Terri's article. It is interesting to note that without the license dollars provided by hunters, the subject of Terri's article—the Merriam's turkey—would not exist in Montana today. This non-native species was successfully introduced by FWP biologists in a series of transplants beginning in the 1950s. Today, wild turkeys are present throughout Montana for all of us to enjoy.

While we can't speak for the Colorado Division of Wildlife, we expect its biologists would take issue with your assertion that most of Colorado's wildlife has been killed off by hunters. To cite just one example, Colorado has one of the largest elk herds in the nation.—Editor

A WORD ON WHITEHOUSE

Please send me five copies of your January/February 1996 Special Photo Issue featuring quotes from the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Our cousins in Helena send us your magazine. We look forward to every issue!

Our great-great grandfather, Joseph Whitehouse, was a member of this expedition. We loved seeing the scenes he saw.—Dolores Whitehouse Hoff, Northfield, MA

Lewis's journal entry for July 23, 1805, contains this reference to your great-great grandfather: "At the distance of seven miles a creek 20 yards wide...empties near a cluster of small islands. The stream we called Whitehouse's creek, after Joseph Whitehouse, one of the party...."

Alas, Whitehouse Creek, which empties into the Missouri River southeast of Helena, Montana, is now called Duck Creek.—Editor

CONTRIBUTORS



Vichorek

Helena writer and history buff **DAN VICHOREK** discovered the Matthew Quigley Buffalo Rifle Match a few years back, a gathering in which shooters test their skills with big-caliber buffalo guns at targets out to nearly 800 yards (p. 2). Named for the protagonist in the Tom Selleck movie, "Quigley Down Under," the match is sponsored by the Forsyth Rifle & Pistol Club and held each June a few miles north of the Yellowstone River at the ranch of A.G. Lee, Jr. Says Vichorek, who attended the match in 1994 and 1995, "I used to think I knew how to shoot a rifle, but I'll just stay on the porch from now on."

In our March/April 1996 issue, **MIKE ADERHOLD** reported on the status of Montana's seven endangered species. In a sequel beginning on page 6, he summarizes the latest information for the state's five animals and plants classified as threatened. Aderhold, who is supervisor for FWP's Region 4 (Great Falls), says the article would not have been possible without the help of individuals from the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Montana Natural Heritage Program, University of Montana, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and his FWP colleagues.

According to experts **DENNIS SCARNECCHIA** and **PHIL STEWART**, the paddlefish has not fared well over much of its range. But Montana's

stocks, which are among the last in the nation capable of supporting sport fisheries, continue to thrive because of good spawning conditions in the lower Yellowstone River and the Missouri River above Fort Peck Reservoir. To learn how FWP biologists are using new techniques to monitor this ancient fish and ensure its long-term survival, turn to "Managing Montana's Paddlefish: New Approaches" (p. 10). Scarnecchia is an associate professor in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, University of Idaho, Moscow, and Stewart is FWP's fisheries manager for Region 7 (Miles City).

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has had an active land program for many years, says **STEVE KNAPP**, but land values and social resistance have



Knapp

always precluded purchase of extensive acreages. In this issue's "Lands Legacy" installment (p. 15), he explains how new partnerships called conservation easements are broadening the horizons for FWP's habitat conservation and public access programs, while at the same time maintaining privately owned land in traditional uses. Knapp is habitat bureau chief for the Wildlife Division at FWP's Helena headquarters.

"There: the angler's noun. You can be *near* there, or *around* there, or *by* there, but there's no place like there.... it's a precise footing on a bend, or a riffle where every willow, current and cloud is in place." So opines **SCOTT WALDIE** in "There" (p. 19), a haunting story that involves a youngster from a broken home, Montana's Ruby River, and a Mother's Day caddis hatch. Waldie is a Sheridan, Montana, writer

whose articles and fiction have appeared in numerous flyfishing magazines. A collection of his stories will be published by Lyons & Burford in spring of 1997. Waldie's story is illustrated by **DARRELL DAVIS**, who works from his home/studio at 1900 Broadway, Helena, MT 59601.

"Pack up the babies and grab the old fly pole, hitch on the drift boat and throw in the camping gear. It's salmonfly time!" Every year, **LEO KEANE** makes the pilgrimage from his home in Whitefish to southwestern Montana to take in "The Big Hole River Salmonfly Hatch and Western Tanager

Show" (p. 24). Thanks to swarms of the big stoneflies, says Keane, everything goes a little crazy during the hatch: the trout, the songbirds, and, of course,



Keane

the anglers. A dedicated flyfisher and birder, Keane is president of the Flathead Chapter of the Audubon Society.

MO thanks the following artists and photographers for their contributions to this issue: **MIKE BARLOW**, Livingston; **ALAN** and **SANDY CAREY**, **PHIL FARNES**, and **DUSAN SMETANA**, Bozeman; **DARRELL DAVIS**, **BONNIE HEIDEL**, **HOWARD JOHNSON**, and **DAN VICHOREK**, Helena; **SAM M. ESPELAND**, Glasgow; **D. ROBERT FRANZ**, Morrison, CO; **ALLEN JIMMERSON**, Columbia Falls; **DONALD M. JONES**, Troy; **AL TROTH**, Dillon; **TOM J. ULRICH**, West Glacier; **PAUL UPDIKE**, Townsend; **SCOTT WHEELER**, Butte; and **ALLEN WIEDERRICH**, Crane. Thanks also to the following contributors who work for the department: **KRISTI DUBOIS**, Great Falls; and **KENT GILGE**, Chinook.

